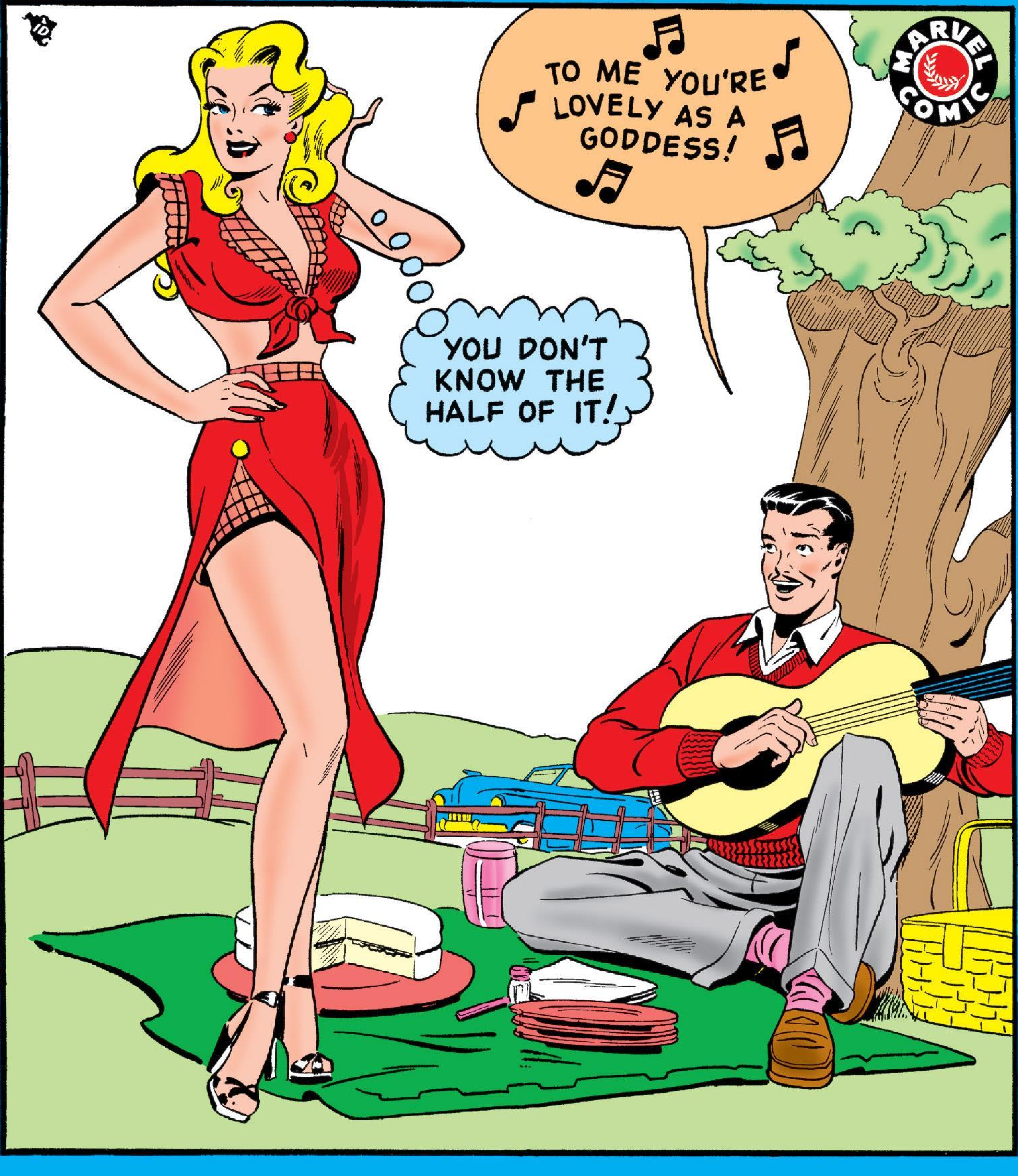
VENUS

JUNE NO. 5


MARVEL COMIC
TO ME YOU'RE LOVELY AS A GODDESS!
YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT!

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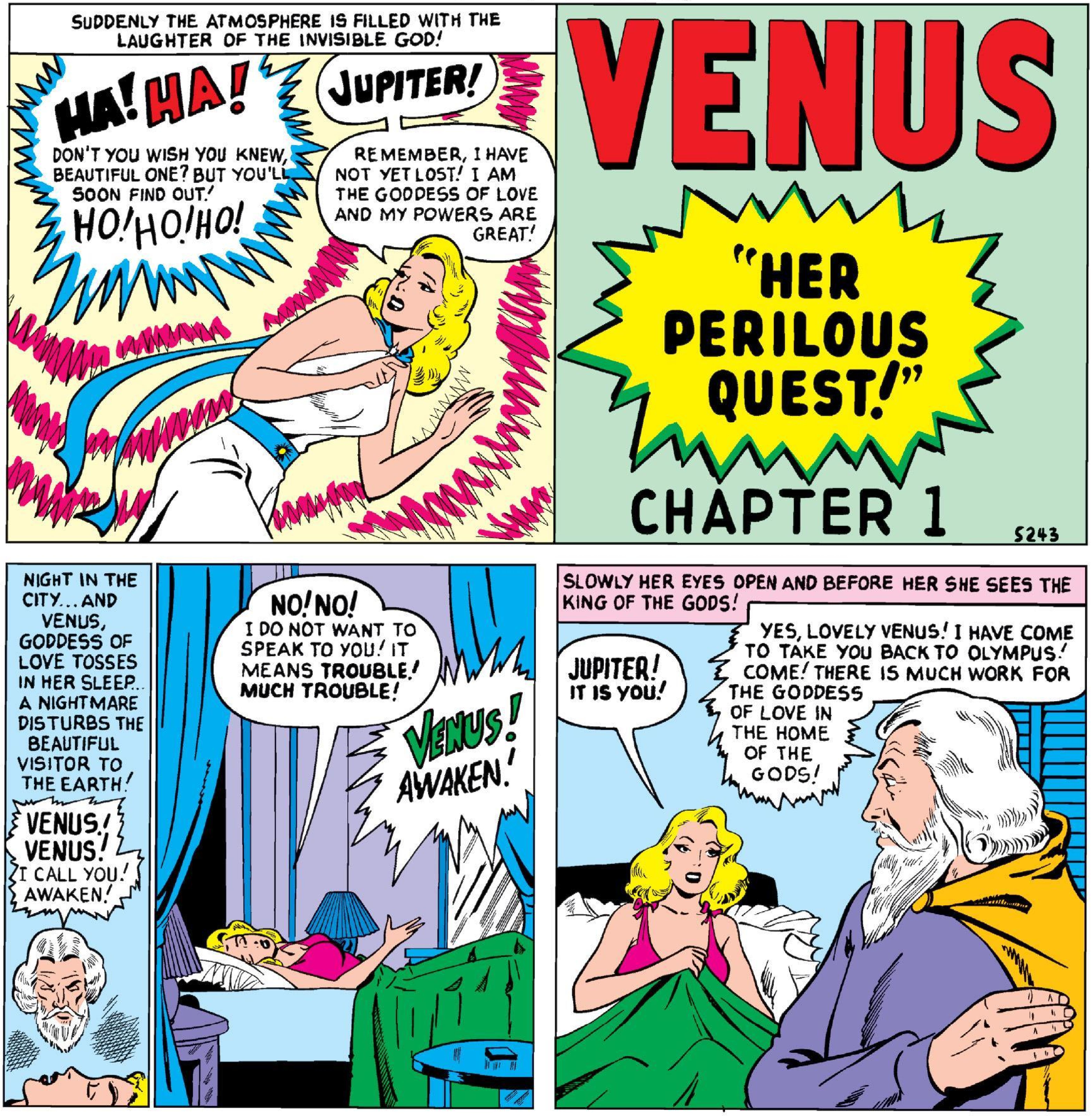
Board of Education, New York City


SUDDENLY THE ATMOSPHERE IS FILLED WITH THE LAUGHTER OF THE INVISIBLE GOD!
HA! HA! DON'T YOU WISH YOU KNEW, BEAUTIFUL ONE? BUT YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT! HO! HO! HO!
JUPITER!
REMEMBER, I HAVE NOT YET LOST! I AM THE GODDESS OF LOVE AND MY POWERS ARE GREAT!
VENUS
"HER PERILOUS QUEST!"
CHAPTER 1
5243
NIGHT IN THE CITY... AND VENUS, GODDESS OF LOVE TOSSES IN HER SLEEP... A NIGHTMARE DISTURBS THE BEAUTIFUL VISITOR TO THE EARTH!
VENUS! VENUS! I CALL YOU! AWAKEN!
NO! NO! I DO NOT WANT TO SPEAK TO YOU! IT MEANS TROUBLE! MUCH TROUBLE!
VENUS! AWAKEN!
SLOWLY HER EYES OPEN AND BEFORE HER SHE SEES THE KING OF THE GODS!
JUPITER! IT IS YOU!
YES, LOVELY VENUS! I HAVE COME TO TAKE YOU BACK TO OLYMPUS! COME! THERE IS MUCH WORK FOR THE GODDESS OF LOVE IN THE HOME OF THE GODS!
TOO LONG HAVE YOU TARRIED ON EARTH AMONG THESE PUNY MORTALS! THEY ARE NOT WORTHY OF YOU... AND THE MARBLE HALLS OF OLYMPUS ARE GLOOMY WITHOUT YOU!
HAVE PITY, OH JUPITER! I HAVE MANY TASKS! COUNTLESS SWEETHEARTS NEED MY HELP!
BUT THE LORD OF THE GODS LAUGHS AT THIS!
HO! PUNY EARTHLINGS? NEVER CAN THESE PEOPLE COMPARE WITH THE GREAT ROMANCES OF OUR GODS AND GODDESSES!
WAIT! GIVE ME A MOMENT! I CAN PROVE TO YOU THAT I CAN FIND TWO PEOPLE WHO LOVE AS DEEPLY AS ANY OF THE GODS!
DREADING TO LEAVE EARTH AND WHITNEY HAMMOND, THE EARTHMAN SHE LOVES, VENUS MAKES A RASH STATEMENT!
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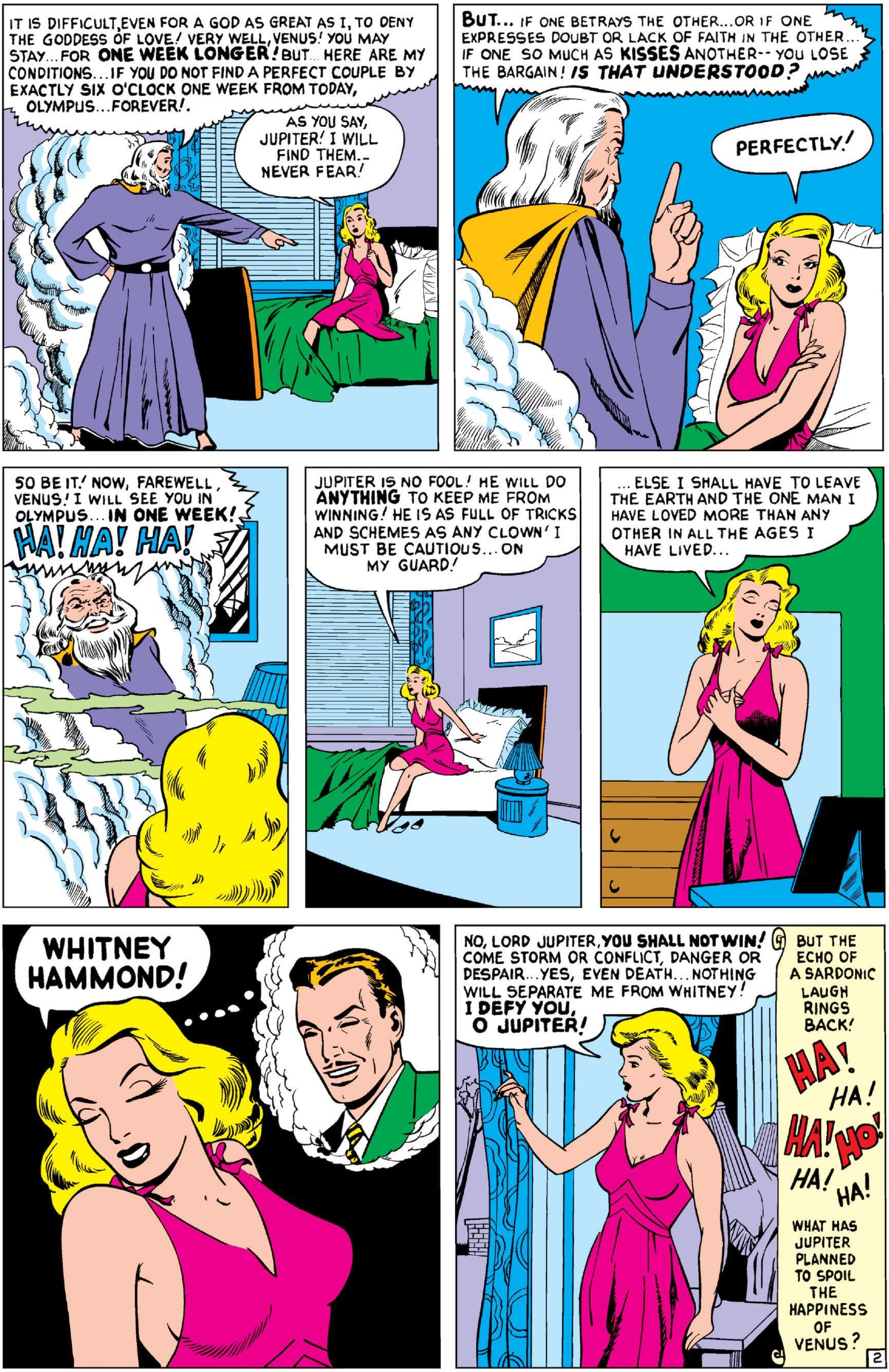
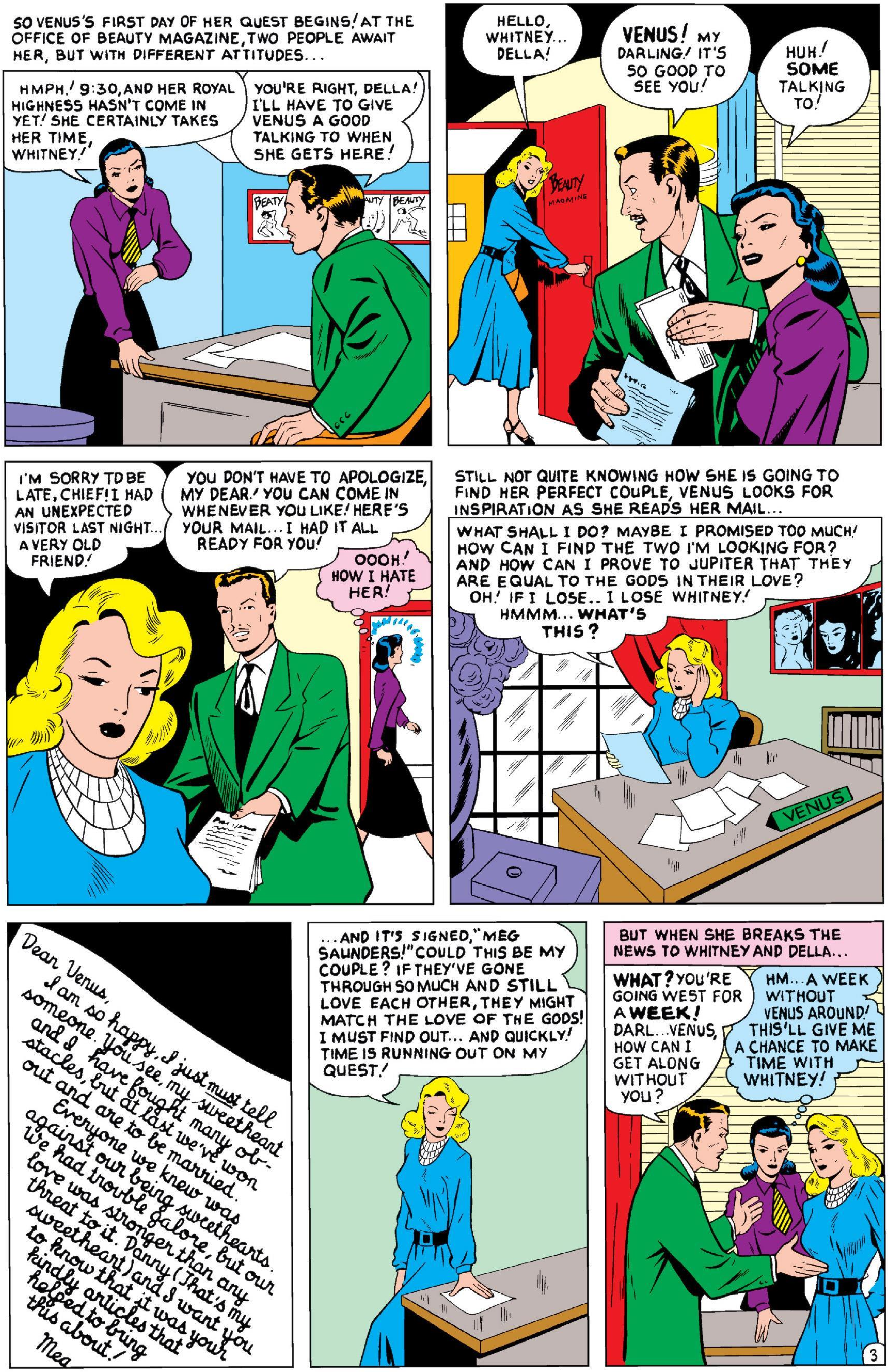

IT IS DIFFICULT, EVEN FOR A GOD AS GREAT AS I, TO DENY THE GODDESS OF LOVE! VERY WELL, VENUS! YOU MAY STAY... FOR ONE WEEK LONGER! BUT... HERE ARE MY CONDITIONS... IF YOU DO NOT FIND A PERFECT COUPLE BY EXACTLY SIX O'CLOCK ONE WEEK FROM TODAY, OLYMPUS... FOREVER!.
AS YOU SAY, JUPITER! I WILL FIND THEM.. NEVER FEAR!
BUT... IF ONE BETRAYS THE OTHER... OR IF ONE EXPRESSES DOUBT OR LACK OF FAITH IN THE OTHER... IF ONE SO MUCH AS KISSES ANOTHER-- YOU LOSE THE BARGAIN! IS THAT UNDERSTOOD?
PERFECTLY!
SO BE IT! NOW, FAREWELL, VENUS! I WILL SEE YOU IN OLYMPUS... IN ONE WEEK! HA! HA! HA!
JUPITER IS NO FOOL! HE WILL DO ANYTHING TO KEEP ME FROM WINNING! HE IS AS FULL OF TRICKS AND SCHEMES AS ANY CLOWN! I MUST BE CAUTIOUS... ON MY GUARD!
...ELSE I SHALL HAVE TO LEAVE THE EARTH AND THE ONE MAN I HAVE LOVED MORE THAN ANY OTHER IN ALL THE AGES I HAVE LIVED...
WHITNEY HAMMOND!
NO, LORD JUPITER, YOU SHALL NOT WIN! COME STORM OR CONFLICT, DANGER OR DESPAIR... YES, EVEN DEATH... NOTHING WILL SEPARATE ME FROM WHITNEY! I DEFY YOU, O JUPITER!
BUT THE ECHO OF A SARDONIC LAUGH RINGS BACK!
HA! HA! HA! HO! HA! HA!
WHAT HAS JUPITER PLANNED TO SPOIL THE HAPPINESS OF VENUS?

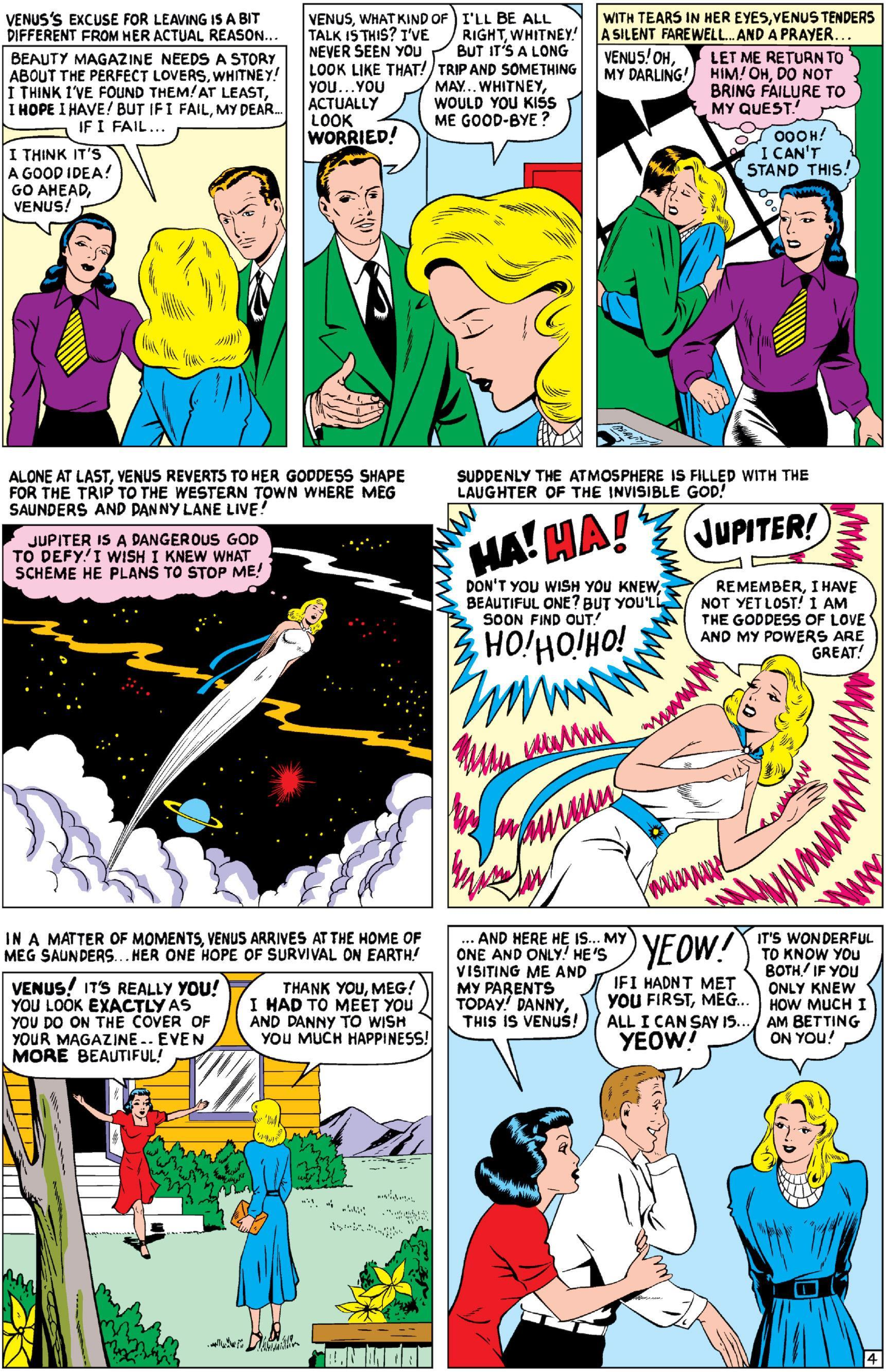

SO VENUS'S FIRST DAY OF HER QUEST BEGINS! AT THE OFFICE OF BEAUTY MAGAZINE, TWO PEOPLE AWAIT HER, BUT WITH DIFFERENT ATTITUDES...
HMPH! 9:30, AND HER ROYAL HIGHNESS HASN'T COME IN YET! SHE CERTAINLY TAKES HER TIME, WHITNEY!
YOU'RE RIGHT, DELLA! I'LL HAVE TO GIVE VENUS A GOOD TALKING TO WHEN SHE GETS HERE!
BEAUTY
HELLO, WHITNEY... DELLA!
VENUS! MY DARLING! IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU!
HUH! SOME TALKING TO!
BEAUTY MAGAZINE
I'M SORRY TO BE LATE, CHIEF! I HAD AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR LAST NIGHT... A VERY OLD FRIEND!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE, MY DEAR! YOU CAN COME IN WHENEVER YOU LIKE! HERE'S YOUR MAIL... I HAD IT ALL READY FOR YOU!
OOOH! HOW I HATE HER!
STILL NOT QUITE KNOWING HOW SHE IS GOING TO FIND HER PERFECT COUPLE, VENUS LOOKS FOR INSPIRATION AS SHE READS HER MAIL...
WHAT SHALL I DO? MAYBE I PROMISED TOO MUCH! HOW CAN I FIND THE TWO I'M LOOKING FOR? AND HOW CAN I PROVE TO JUPITER THAT THEY ARE EQUAL TO THE GODS IN THEIR LOVE? OH! IF I LOSE.. I LOSE WHITNEY! HMMM... WHAT'S THIS?
VENUS

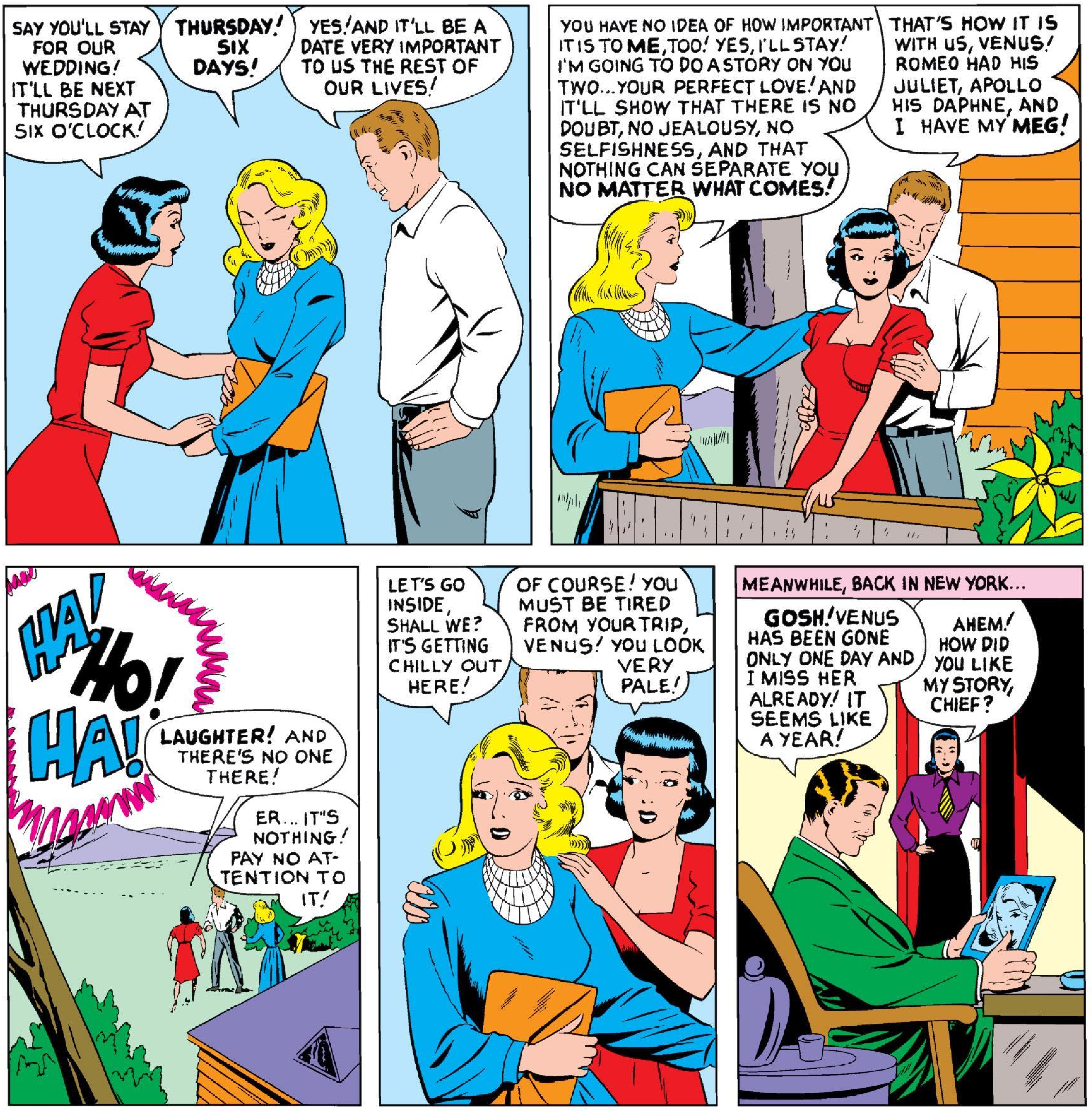
Dear Venus,

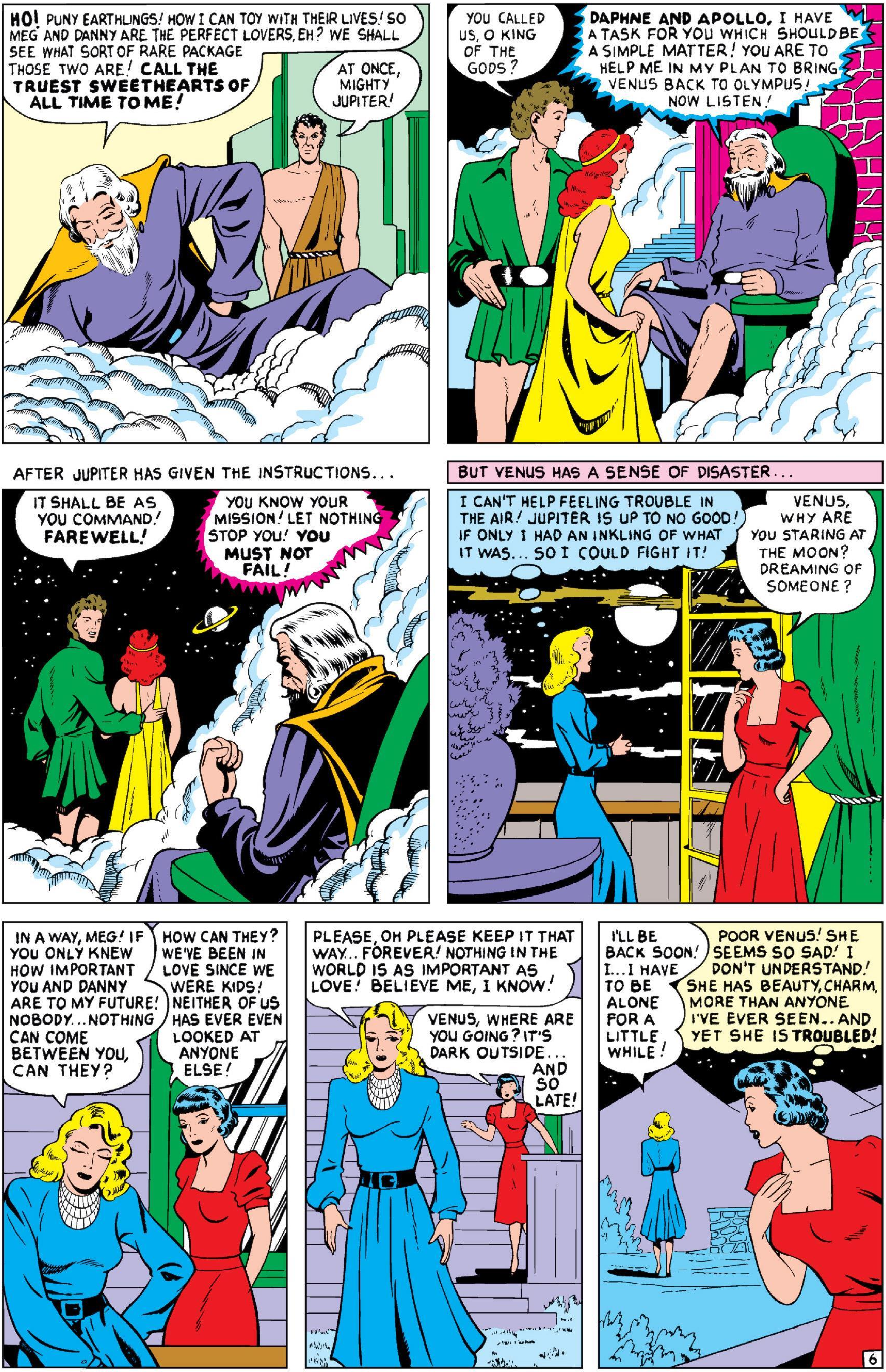
I am so happy, I just must tell someone. You see, my sweetheart and I have fought many obstacles, but at last we've won out and are to be married. Everyone we knew was against our being sweethearts. We had trouble galore, but our love was stronger than any threat to it. Danny (That's my sweetheart) and I want you to know that it was your kindly articles that helped to bring this about!

Meg

...AND IT'S SIGNED, "MEG SAUNDERS!" COULD THIS BE MY COUPLE? IF THEY'VE GONE THROUGH SO MUCH AND STILL LOVE EACH OTHER, THEY MIGHT MATCH THE LOVE OF THE GODS! I MUST FIND OUT... AND QUICKLY! TIME IS RUNNING OUT ON MY QUEST!
BUT WHEN SHE BREAKS THE NEWS TO WHITNEY AND DELLA...
WHAT? YOU'RE GOING WEST FOR A WEEK! DARL...VENUS, HOW CAN I GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU?
HM...A WEEK WITHOUT VENUS AROUND! THIS'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO MAKE TIME WITH WHITNEY!


VENUS'S EXCUSE FOR LEAVING IS A BIT DIFFERENT FROM HER ACTUAL REASON...
BEAUTY MAGAZINE NEEDS A STORY ABOUT THE PERFECT LOVERS, WHITNEY! I THINK I'VE FOUND THEM! AT LEAST, I HOPE I HAVE! BUT IF I FAIL, MY DEAR... IF I FAIL...
I THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA! GO AHEAD, VENUS!
VENUS, WHAT KIND OF TALK IS THIS? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LOOK LIKE THAT! YOU... YOU ACTUALLY LOOK WORRIED!
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT, WHITNEY! BUT IT'S A LONG TRIP AND SOMETHING MAY... WHITNEY, WOULD YOU KISS ME GOOD-BYE?
WITH TEARS IN HER EYES, VENUS TENDERS A SILENT FAREWELL... AND A PRAYER...
VENUS! OH, MY DARLING!
LET ME RETURN TO HIM! OH, DO NOT BRING FAILURE TO MY QUEST!
OOOH! I CAN'T STAND THIS!
ALONE AT LAST, VENUS REVERTS TO HER GODDESS SHAPE FOR THE TRIP TO THE WESTERN TOWN WHERE MEG SAUNDERS AND DANNY LANE LIVE!
JUPITER IS A DANGEROUS GOD TO DEFY! I WISH I KNEW WHAT SCHEME HE PLANS TO STOP ME!
SUDDENLY THE ATMOSPHERE IS FILLED WITH THE LAUGHTER OF THE INVISIBLE GOD!
HA! HA!
DON'T YOU WISH YOU KNEW, BEAUTIFUL ONE? BUT YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT! HO! HO! HO!
JUPITER!
REMEMBER, I HAVE NOT YET LOST! I AM THE GODDESS OF LOVE AND MY POWERS ARE GREAT!
IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, VENUS ARRIVES AT THE HOME OF MEG SAUNDERS... HER ONE HOPE OF SURVIVAL ON EARTH!
VENUS! IT'S REALLY YOU! YOU LOOK EXACTLY AS YOU DO ON THE COVER OF YOUR MAGAZINE -- EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL!
THANK YOU, MEG! I HAD TO MEET YOU AND DANNY TO WISH YOU MUCH HAPPINESS!
... AND HERE HE IS... MY ONE AND ONLY! HE'S VISITING ME AND MY PARENTS TODAY! DANNY, THIS IS VENUS!
YEOW!
IF I HADN'T MET YOU FIRST, MEG... ALL I CAN SAY IS... YEOW!
IT'S WONDERFUL TO KNOW YOU BOTH! IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW MUCH I AM BETTING ON YOU!


SAY YOU'LL STAY FOR OUR WEDDING! IT'LL BE NEXT THURSDAY AT SIX O'CLOCK!
THURSDAY! SIX DAYS!
YES! AND IT'LL BE A DATE VERY IMPORTANT TO US THE REST OF OUR LIVES!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA OF HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO ME, TOO! YES, I'LL STAY! I'M GOING TO DO A STORY ON YOU TWO... YOUR PERFECT LOVE! AND IT'LL SHOW THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT, NO JEALOUSY, NO SELFISHNESS, AND THAT NOTHING CAN SEPARATE YOU NO MATTER WHAT COMES!
THAT'S HOW IT IS WITH US, VENUS! ROMEO HAD HIS JULIET, APOLLO HIS DAPHNE, AND I HAVE MY MEG!
HA! HO! HA!
LAUGHTER! AND THERE'S NO ONE THERE!
ER... IT'S NOTHING! PAY NO ATTENTION TO IT!
LET'S GO INSIDE, SHALL WE? IT'S GETTING CHILLY OUT HERE!
OF COURSE! YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM YOUR TRIP, VENUS! YOU LOOK VERY PALE!
MEANWHILE, BACK IN NEW YORK...
GOSH! VENUS HAS BEEN GONE ONLY ONE DAY AND I MISS HER ALREADY! IT SEEMS LIKE A YEAR!
AHEM! HOW DID YOU LIKE MY STORY, CHIEF?
YOU CALL THAT A STORY? I'M VERY SORRY, DELLA! YOU JUST HAVE NO TALENT FOR THAT SORT OF THING! VENUS WILL HAVE TO WRITE IT!
IS THAT SO? THAT GIRL HAS MADE YOU SO GOOFY YOU CAN'T SEE STRAIGHT! BEFORE SHE CAME, YOU... YOU... USED TO CARE FOR ME!
OH, WHITNEY, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?
LOVE! THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENED! VENUS IS THE ONLY WOMAN ON EARTH AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED-- SHE'S PERFECT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! BUT I'VE GOT A HUNCH ABOUT HER TRIP! THERE'S SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT IT! CALL IT WOMAN'S INTUITION, BUT I TELL YOU THAT SHE'S IN TROUBLE... SERIOUS TROUBLE! SHE'S NOT COMING BACK! MARK MY WORDS!
AND THE FAINT ECHO OF JUPITER'S LAUGH IS HEARD AGAIN!


HO! PUNY EARTHLINGS! HOW I CAN TOY WITH THEIR LIVES! SO MEG AND DANNY ARE THE PERFECT LOVERS, EH? WE SHALL SEE WHAT SORT OF RARE PACKAGE THOSE TWO ARE! CALL THE TRUEST SWEETHEARTS OF ALL TIME TO ME!
AT ONCE, MIGHTY JUPITER!
YOU CALLED US, O KING OF THE GODS?
DAPHNE AND APOLLO, I HAVE A TASK FOR YOU WHICH SHOULD BE A SIMPLE MATTER! YOU ARE TO HELP ME IN MY PLAN TO BRING VENUS BACK TO OLYMPUS! NOW LISTEN!
AFTER JUPITER HAS GIVEN THE INSTRUCTIONS...
IT SHALL BE AS YOU COMMAND! FAREWELL!
YOU KNOW YOUR MISSION! LET NOTHING STOP YOU! YOU MUST NOT FAIL!
BUT VENUS HAS A SENSE OF DISASTER...
I CAN'T HELP FEELING TROUBLE IN THE AIR! JUPITER IS UP TO NO GOOD! IF ONLY I HAD AN INKLING OF WHAT IT WAS... SO I COULD FIGHT IT!
VENUS, WHY ARE YOU STARING AT THE MOON? DREAMING OF SOMEONE?
IN A WAY, MEG! IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW IMPORTANT YOU AND DANNY ARE TO MY FUTURE! NOBODY...NOTHING CAN COME BETWEEN YOU, CAN THEY?
HOW CAN THEY? WE'VE BEEN IN LOVE SINCE WE WERE KIDS! NEITHER OF US HAS EVER EVEN LOOKED AT ANYONE ELSE!
PLEASE, OH PLEASE KEEP IT THAT WAY... FOREVER! NOTHING IN THE WORLD IS AS IMPORTANT AS LOVE! BELIEVE ME, I KNOW!
VENUS, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? IT'S DARK OUTSIDE... AND SO LATE!
I'LL BE BACK SOON! I...I HAVE TO BE ALONE FOR A LITTLE WHILE!
POOR VENUS! SHE SEEMS SO SAD! I DON'T UNDERSTAND! SHE HAS BEAUTY, CHARM, MORE THAN ANYONE I'VE EVER SEEN.. AND YET SHE IS TROUBLED!
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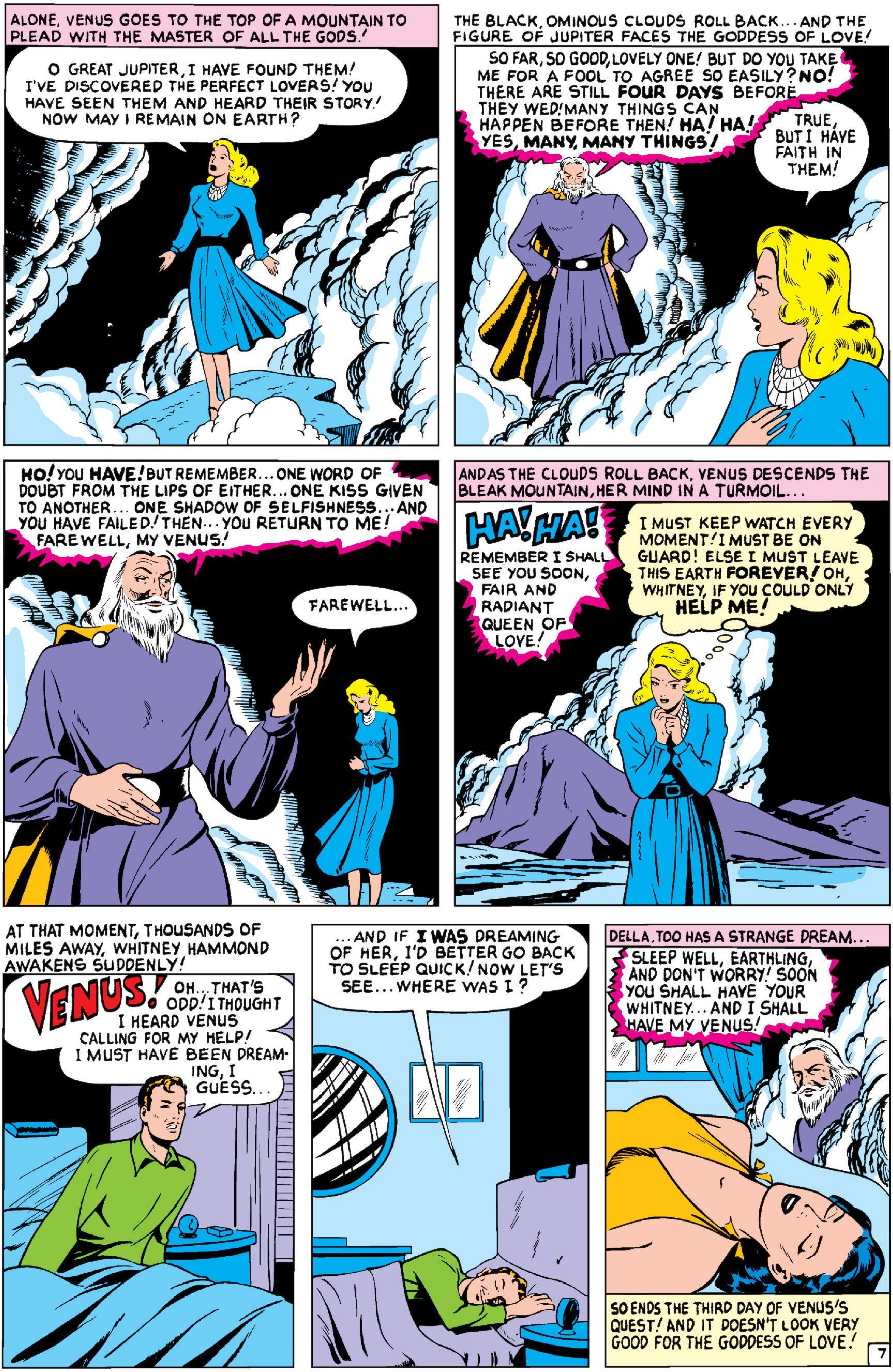
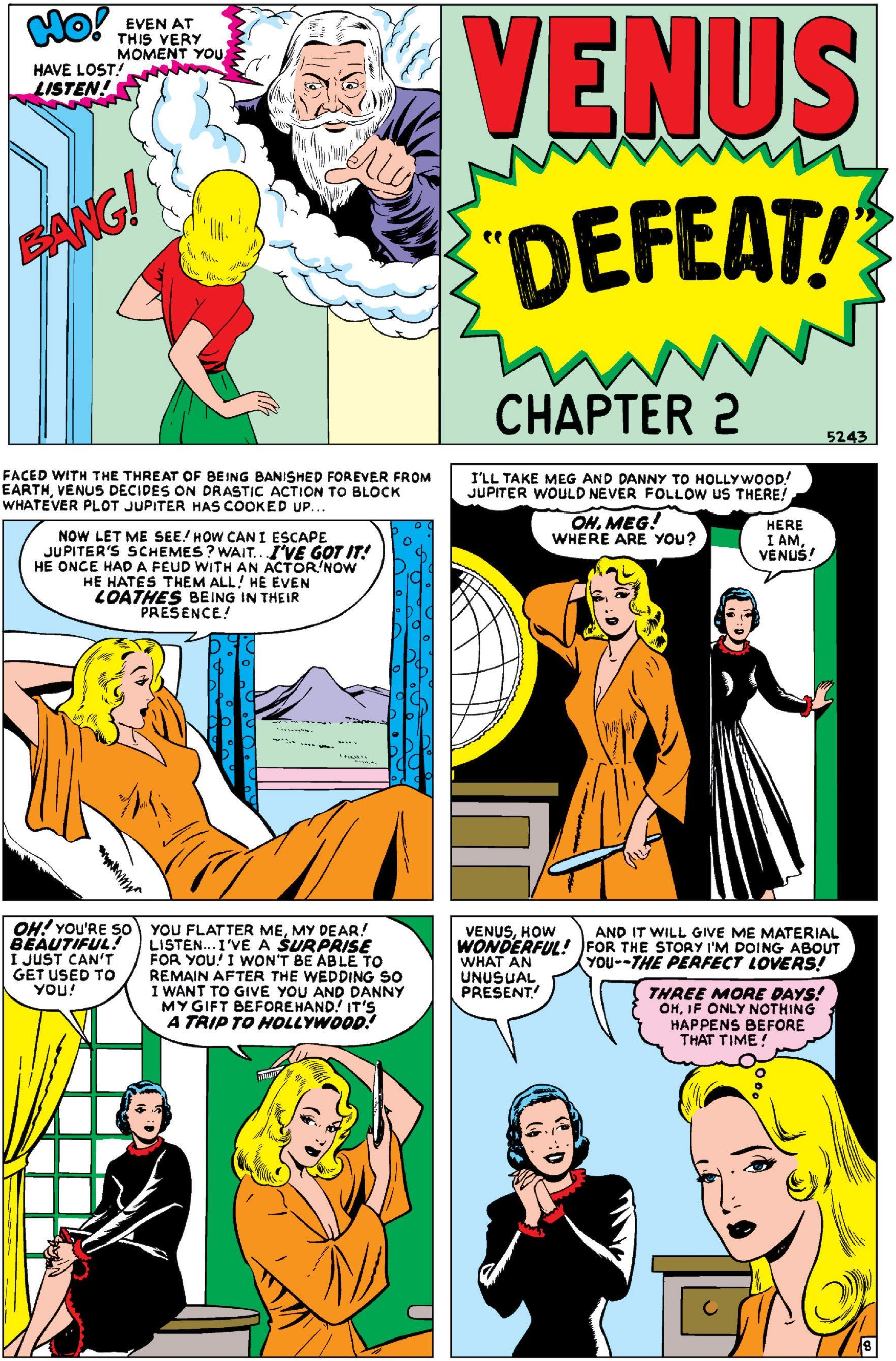

ALONE, VENUS GOES TO THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN TO PLEAD WITH THE MASTER OF ALL THE GODS!
O GREAT JUPITER, I HAVE FOUND THEM! I'VE DISCOVERED THE PERFECT LOVERS! YOU HAVE SEEN THEM AND HEARD THEIR STORY! NOW MAY I REMAIN ON EARTH?
THE BLACK, OMINOUS CLOUDS ROLL BACK... AND THE FIGURE OF JUPITER FACES THE GODDESS OF LOVE!
SO FAR, SO GOOD, LOVELY ONE! BUT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL TO AGREE SO EASILY? NO! THERE ARE STILL FOUR DAYS BEFORE THEY WED! MANY THINGS CAN HAPPEN BEFORE THEN! HA! HA! YES, MANY, MANY THINGS!
TRUE, BUT I HAVE FAITH IN THEM!
HO! YOU HAVE! BUT REMEMBER... ONE WORD OF DOUBT FROM THE LIPS OF EITHER... ONE KISS GIVEN TO ANOTHER... ONE SHADOW OF SELFISHNESS... AND YOU HAVE FAILED! THEN... YOU RETURN TO ME! FAREWELL, MY VENUS!
FAREWELL...
AND AS THE CLOUDS ROLL BACK, VENUS DESCENDS THE BLEAK MOUNTAIN, HER MIND IN A TURMOIL...
HA! HA! REMEMBER I SHALL SEE YOU SOON, FAIR AND RADIANT QUEEN OF LOVE!
I MUST KEEP WATCH EVERY MOMENT! I MUST BE ON GUARD! ELSE I MUST LEAVE THIS EARTH FOREVER! OH, WHITNEY, IF YOU COULD ONLY HELP ME!
AT THAT MOMENT, THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY, WHITNEY HAMMOND AWAKENS SUDDENLY!
VENUS! OH... THAT'S ODD! I THOUGHT I HEARD VENUS CALLING FOR MY HELP! I MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING, I GUESS...
...AND IF I WAS DREAMING OF HER, I'D BETTER GO BACK TO SLEEP QUICK! NOW LET'S SEE... WHERE WAS I?
DELLA, TOO HAS A STRANGE DREAM...
SLEEP WELL, EARTHLING, AND DON'T WORRY! SOON YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR WHITNEY... AND I SHALL HAVE MY VENUS!
SO ENDS THE THIRD DAY OF VENUS'S QUEST! AND IT DOESN'T LOOK VERY GOOD FOR THE GODDESS OF LOVE!


HO! EVEN AT THIS VERY MOMENT YOU HAVE LOST! LISTEN!
BANG!
VENUS
"DEFEAT!"
CHAPTER 2
5243
FACED WITH THE THREAT OF BEING BANISHED FOREVER FROM EARTH, VENUS DECIDES ON DRASTIC ACTION TO BLOCK WHATEVER PLOT JUPITER HAS COOKED UP...
NOW LET ME SEE! HOW CAN I ESCAPE JUPITER'S SCHEMES? WAIT... I'VE GOT IT! HE ONCE HAD A FEUD WITH AN ACTOR! NOW HE HATES THEM ALL! HE EVEN LOATHES BEING IN THEIR PRESENCE!
I'LL TAKE MEG AND DANNY TO HOLLYWOOD! JUPITER WOULD NEVER FOLLOW US THERE!
OH, MEG! WHERE ARE YOU?
HERE I AM, VENUS!
OH! YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL! I JUST CAN'T GET USED TO YOU!
YOU FLATTER ME, MY DEAR! LISTEN... I'VE A SURPRISE FOR YOU! I WON'T BE ABLE TO REMAIN AFTER THE WEDDING SO I WANT TO GIVE YOU AND DANNY MY GIFT BEFOREHAND! IT'S A TRIP TO HOLLYWOOD!
VENUS, HOW WONDERFUL! WHAT AN UNUSUAL PRESENT!
AND IT WILL GIVE ME MATERIAL FOR THE STORY I'M DOING ABOUT YOU--THE PERFECT LOVERS!
THREE MORE DAYS! OH, IF ONLY NOTHING HAPPENS BEFORE THAT TIME!
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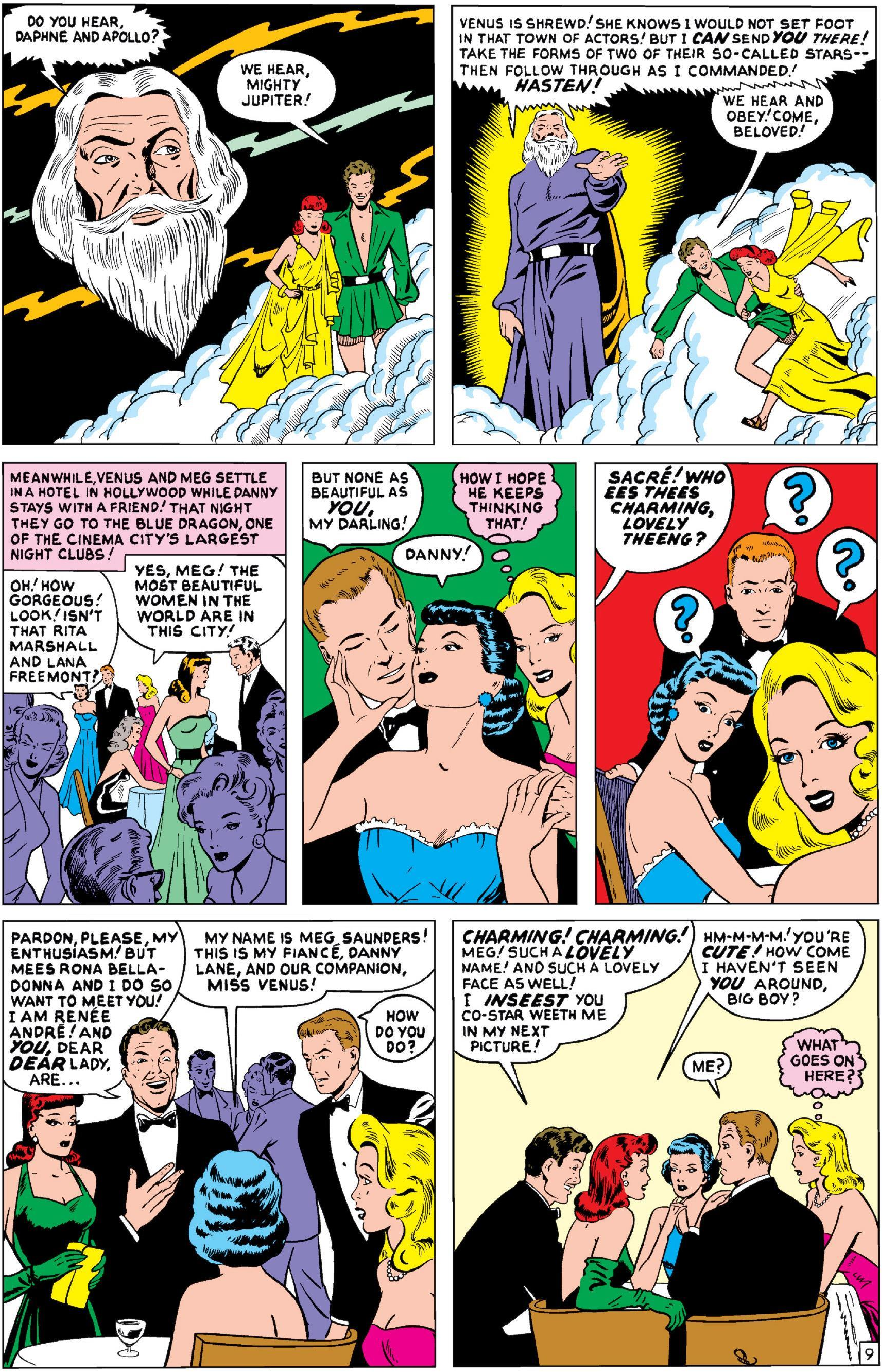
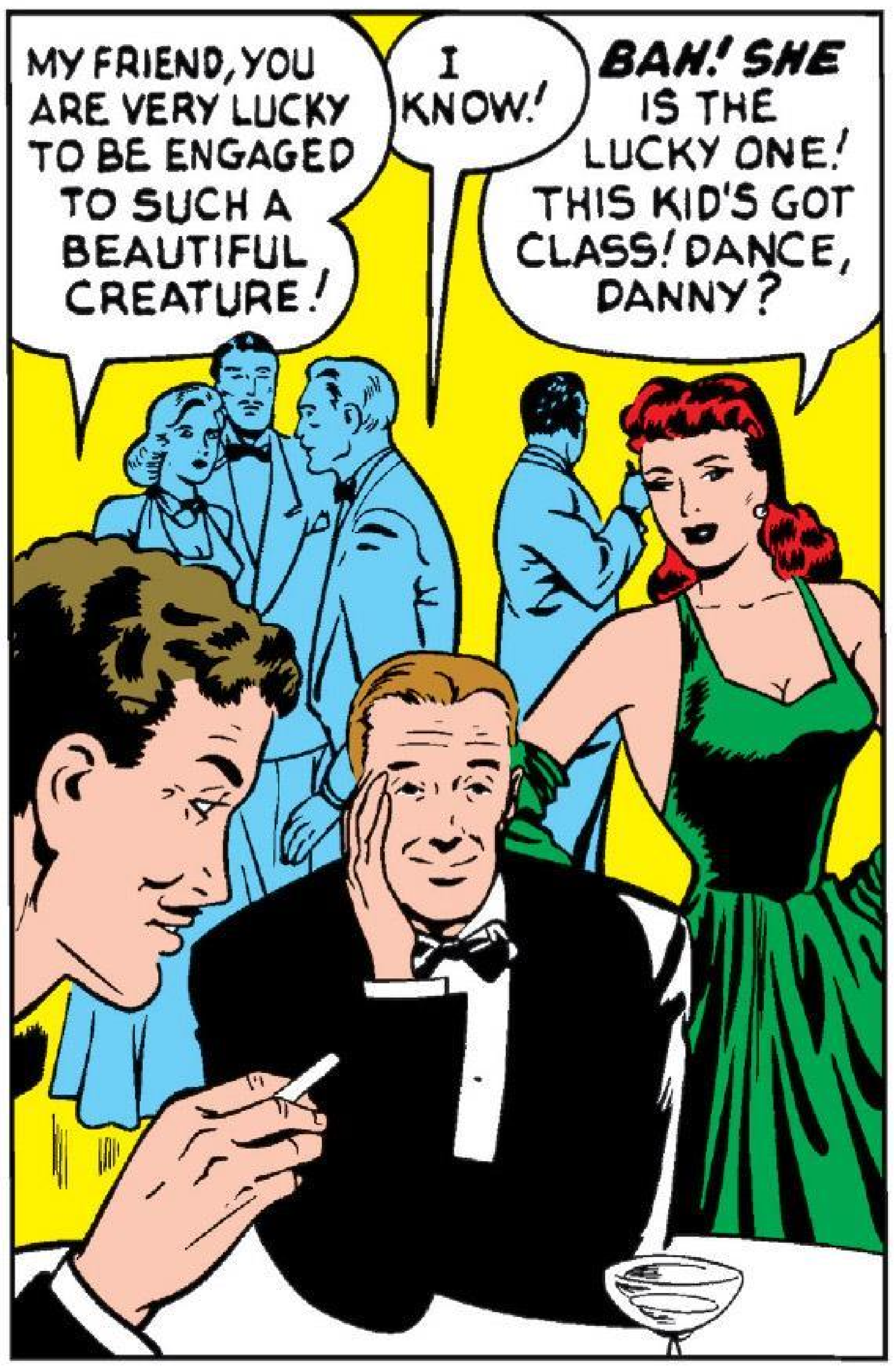
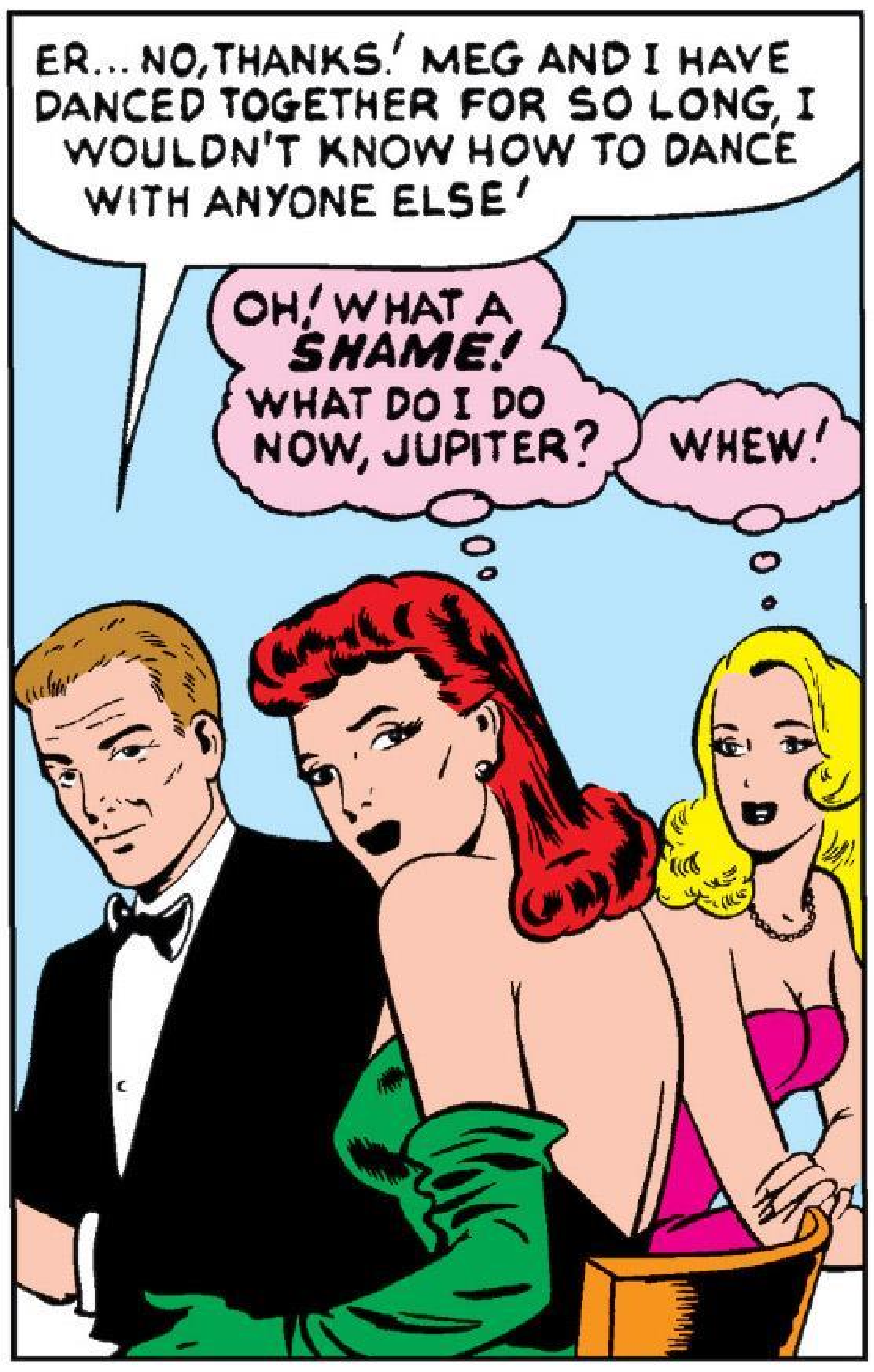
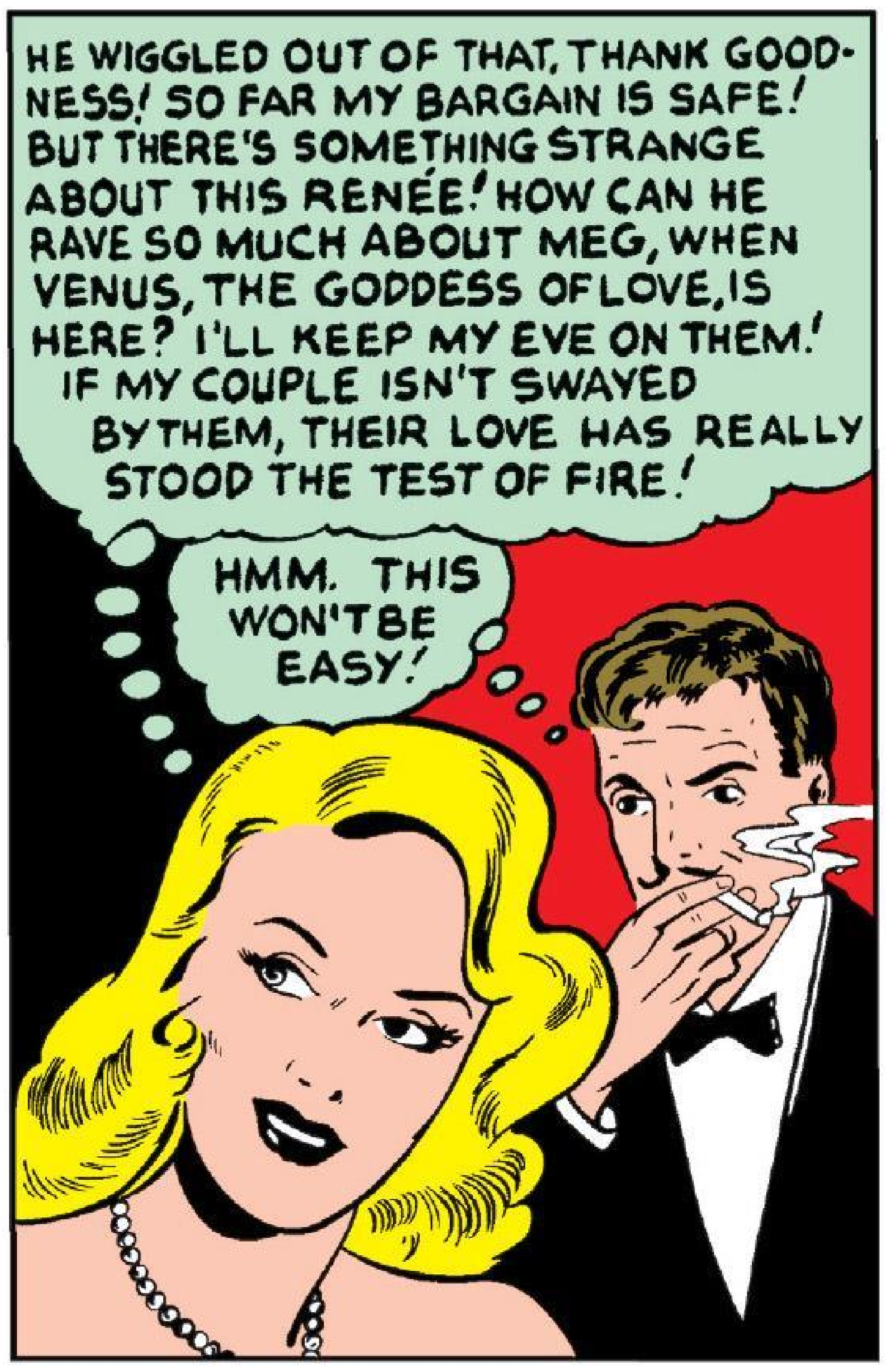
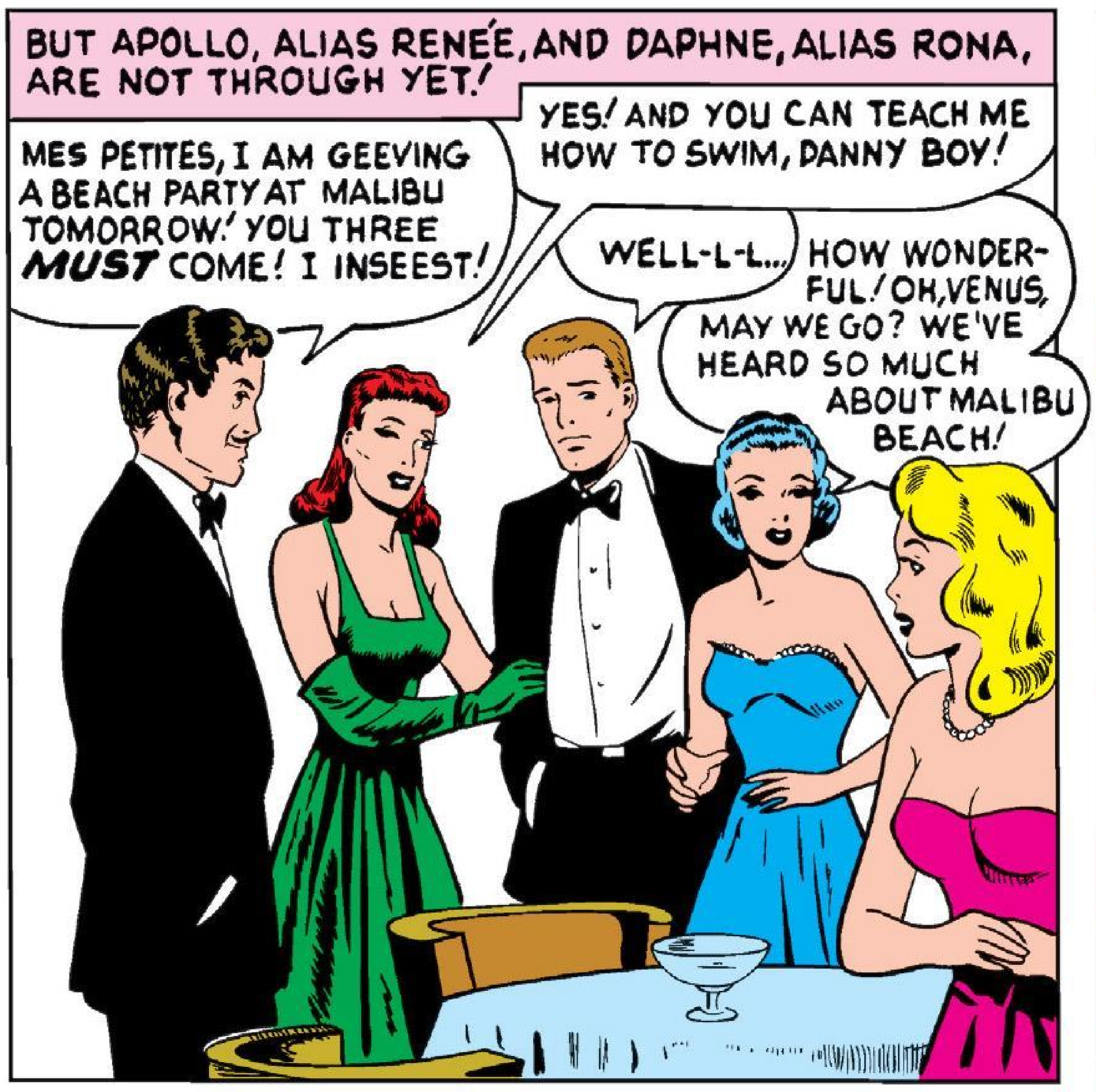
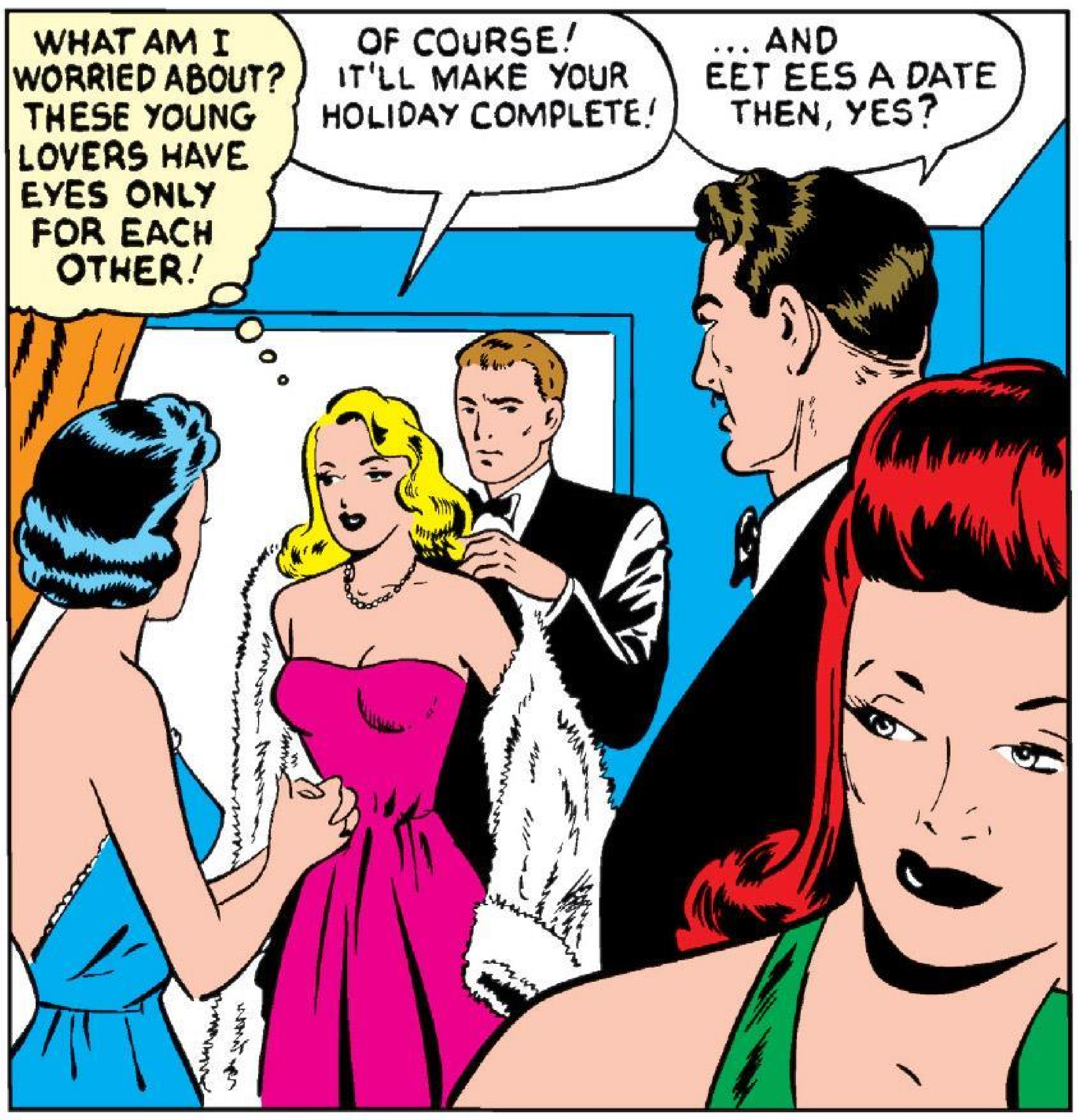

DO YOU HEAR, DAPHNE AND APOLLO?
WE HEAR, MIGHTY JUPITER!
VENUS IS SHREWD! SHE KNOWS I WOULD NOT SET FOOT IN THAT TOWN OF ACTORS! BUT I **CAN** SEND **YOU THERE**! TAKE THE FORMS OF TWO OF THEIR SO-CALLED STARS-- THEN FOLLOW THROUGH AS I COMMANDED! **HASTEN!**
WE HEAR AND OBEY! COME, BELOVED!
MEANWHILE, VENUS AND MEG SETTLE IN A HOTEL IN HOLLYWOOD WHILE DANNY STAYS WITH A FRIEND! THAT NIGHT THEY GO TO THE BLUE DRAGON, ONE OF THE CINEMA CITY'S LARGEST NIGHT CLUBS!
OH! HOW GORGEOUS! LOOK! ISN'T THAT RITA MARSHALL AND LANA FREEMONT?
YES, MEG! THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN THE WORLD ARE IN THIS CITY!
BUT NONE AS BEAUTIFUL AS ***YOU***, MY DARLING!
HOW I HOPE HE KEEPS THINKING THAT!
DANNY!
SACRÉ! WHO EES THEES CHARMING, LOVELY THEENG?
?
?
?
PARDON, PLEASE, MY ENTHUSIASM! BUT MEES RONA BELLADONNA AND I DO SO WANT TO MEET YOU! I AM RENÉE ANDRÉ! AND ***YOU***, DEAR ***DEAR*** LADY, ARE...
MY NAME IS MEG SAUNDERS! THIS IS MY FIANCÉ, DANNY LANE, AND OUR COMPANION, MISS VENUS!
HOW DO YOU DO?
CHARMING! CHARMING! MEG! SUCH A ***LOVELY*** NAME! AND SUCH A LOVELY FACE AS WELL! I ***INSEEST*** YOU CO-STAR WEETH ME IN MY NEXT PICTURE!
HM-M-M-M! YOU'RE ***CUTE!*** HOW COME I HAVEN'T SEEN ***YOU*** AROUND, BIG BOY?
ME?
WHAT GOES ON HERE?

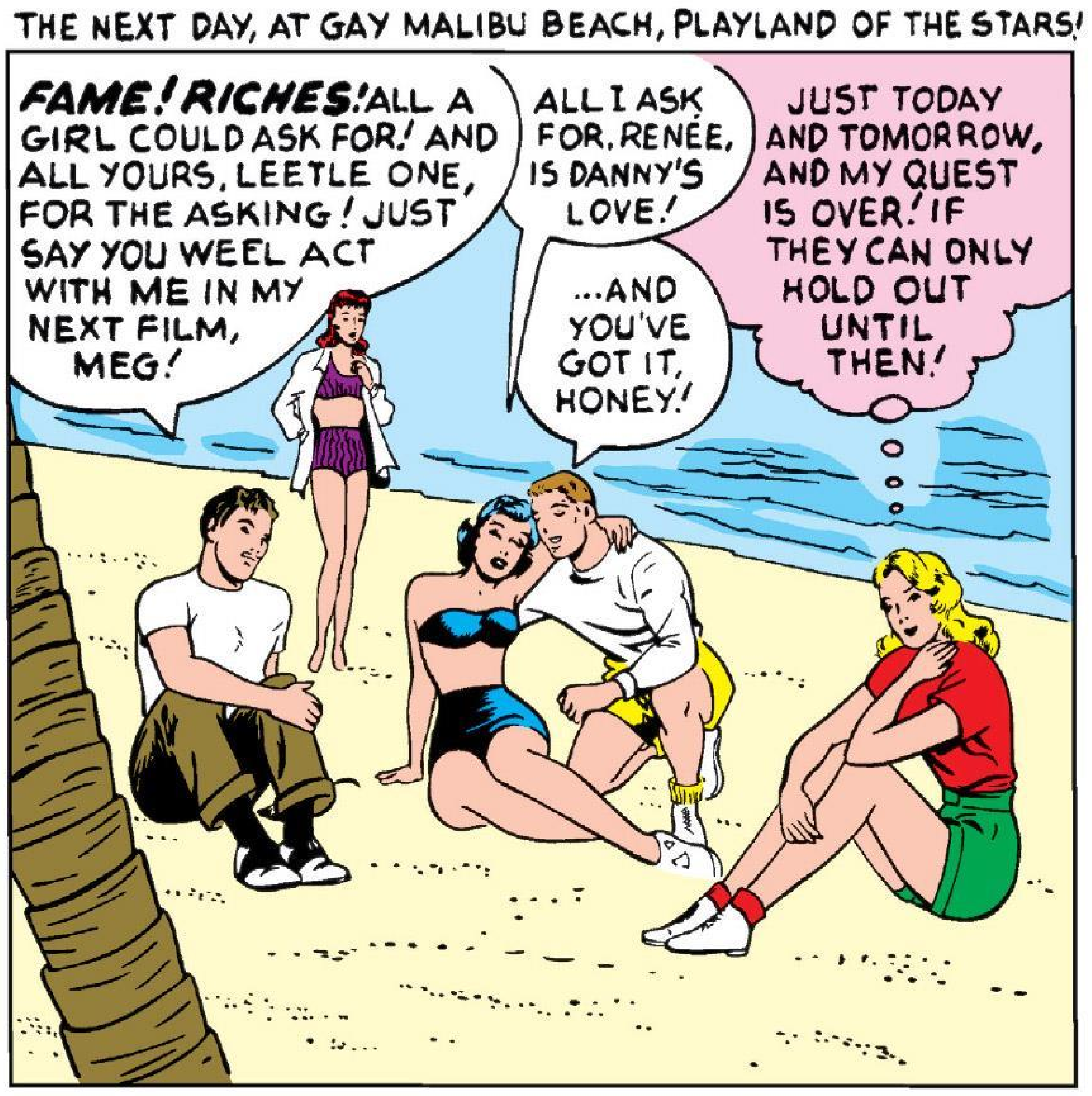

MY FRIEND, YOU ARE VERY LUCKY TO BE ENGAGED TO SUCH A BEAUTIFUL CREATURE!
I KNOW!
BAH! SHE IS THE LUCKY ONE! THIS KID'S GOT CLASS! DANCE, DANNY?

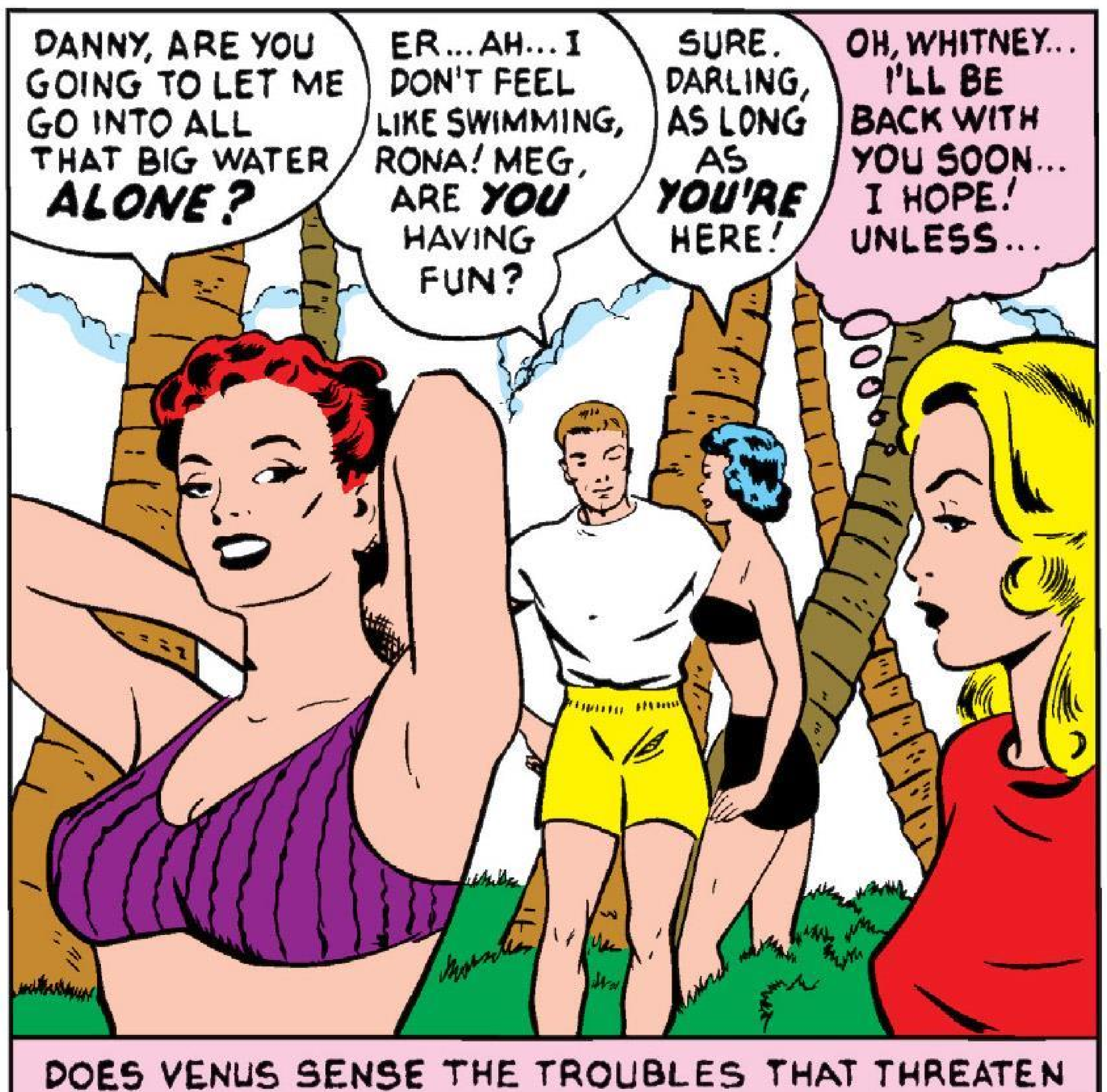

ER... NO, THANKS! MEG AND I HAVE DANCED TOGETHER FOR SO LONG, I WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE WITH ANYONE ELSE!
OH! WHAT A SHAME! WHAT DO I DO NOW, JUPITER?
WHEW!


HE WIGGLED OUT OF THAT, THANK GOODNESS! SO FAR MY BARGAIN IS SAFE! BUT THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS RENÉE! HOW CAN HE RAVE SO MUCH ABOUT MEG, WHEN VENUS, THE GODDESS OF LOVE, IS HERE? I'LL KEEP MY EYE ON THEM! IF MY COUPLE ISN'T SWAYED BY THEM, THEIR LOVE HAS REALLY STOOD THE TEST OF FIRE!
HMM. THIS WON'T BE EASY!

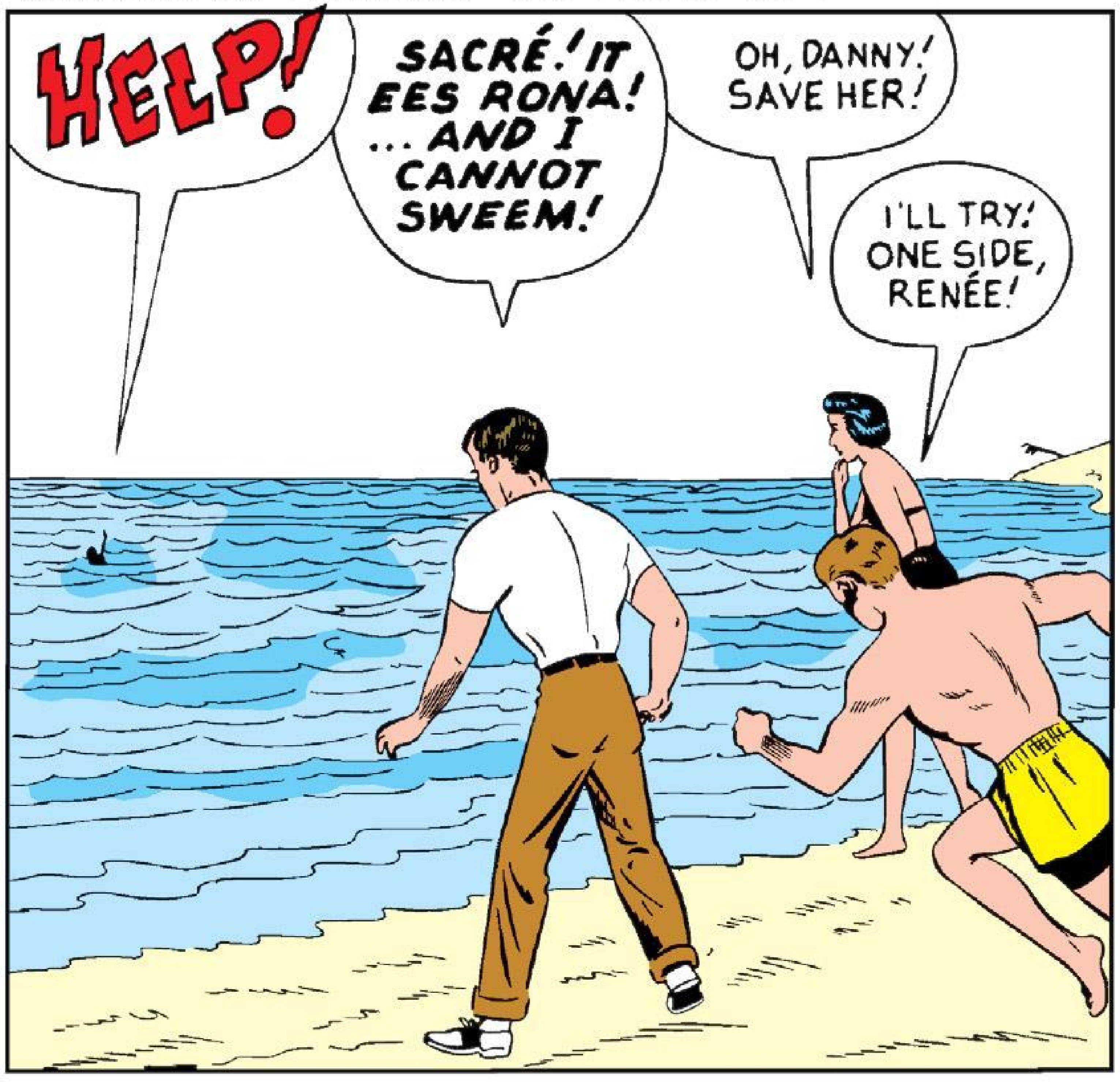

BUT APOLLO, ALIAS RENÉE, AND DAPHNE, ALIAS RONA, ARE NOT THROUGH YET!
MES PETITES, I AM GEEVING A BEACH PARTY AT MALIBU TOMORROW! YOU THREE MUST COME! I INSEEST!
YES! AND YOU CAN TEACH ME HOW TO SWIM, DANNY BOY!
WELL-L-L...
HOW WONDERFUL! OH, VENUS, MAY WE GO? WE'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT MALIBU BEACH!

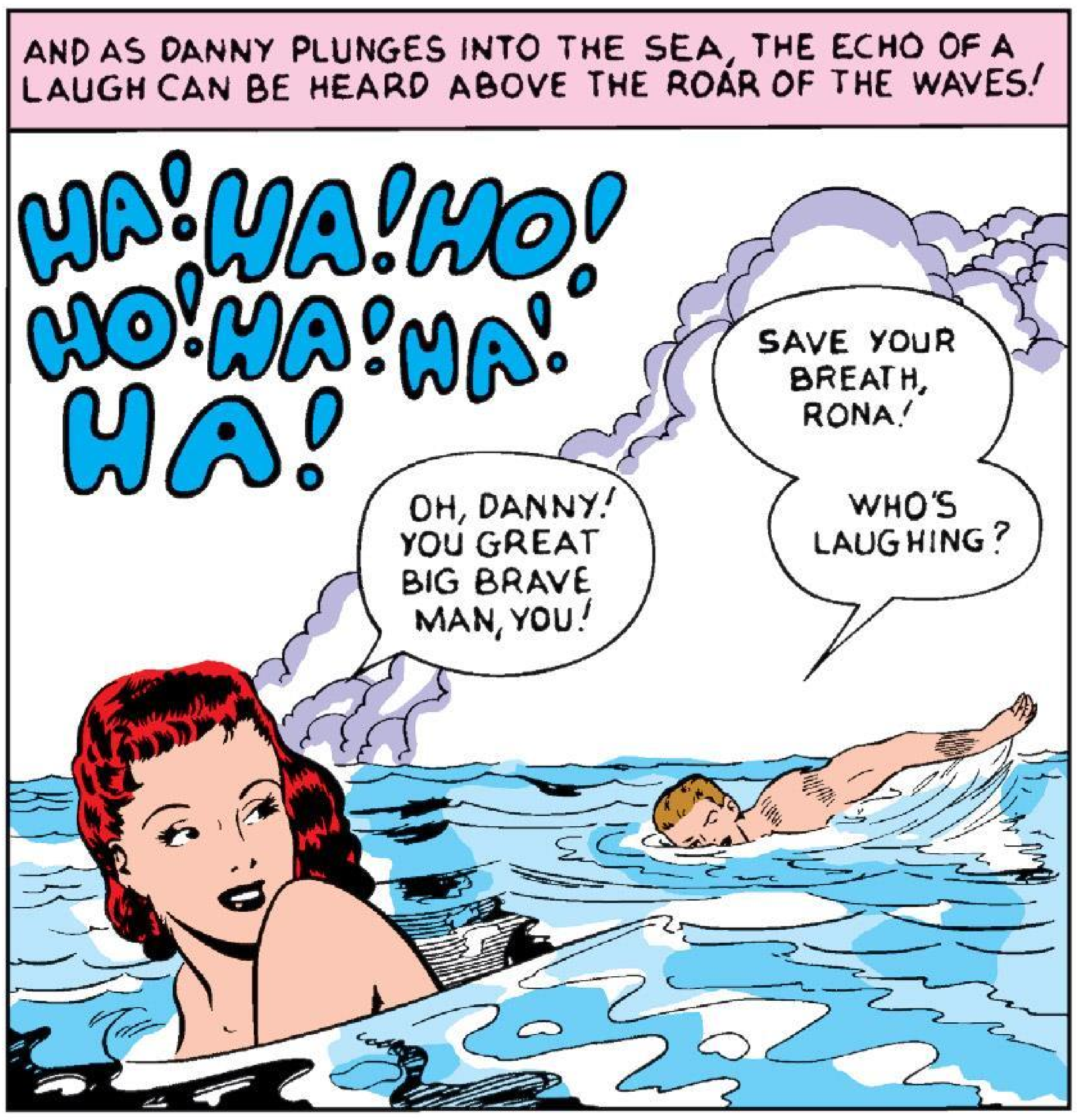

WHAT AM I WORRIED ABOUT? THESE YOUNG LOVERS HAVE EYES ONLY FOR EACH OTHER!
OF COURSE! IT'LL MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY COMPLETE!
... AND EET EES A DATE THEN, YES?

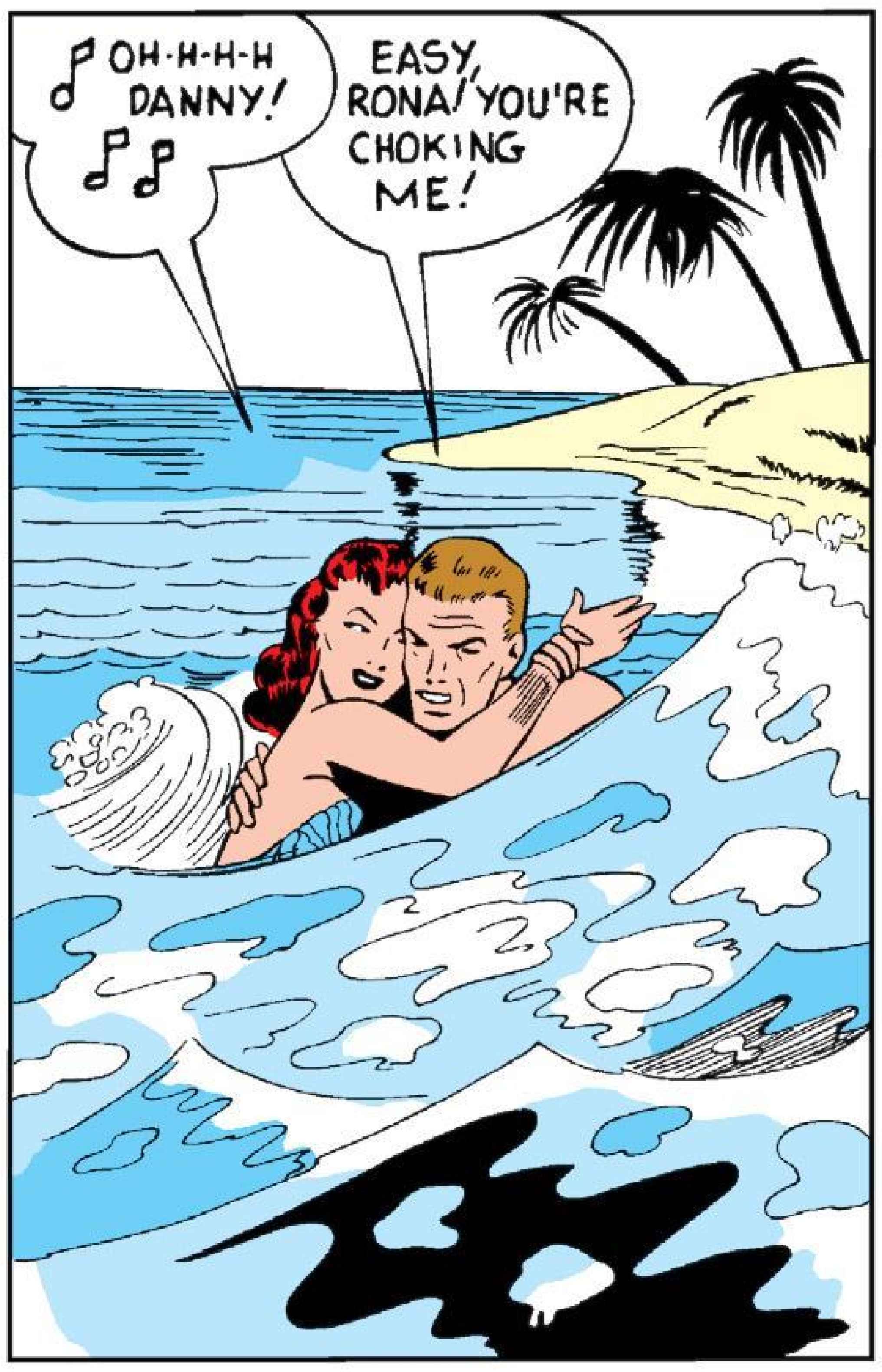

THE NEXT DAY, AT GAY MALIBU BEACH, PLAYLAND OF THE STARS!
FAME! RICHES! ALL A GIRL COULD ASK FOR! AND ALL YOURS, LEETLE ONE, FOR THE ASKING! JUST SAY YOU WEEL ACT WITH ME IN MY NEXT FILM, MEG!
ALL I ASK FOR, RENÉE, IS DANNY'S LOVE!
...AND YOU'VE GOT IT, HONEY!
JUST TODAY AND TOMORROW, AND MY QUEST IS OVER! IF THEY CAN ONLY HOLD OUT UNTIL THEN!

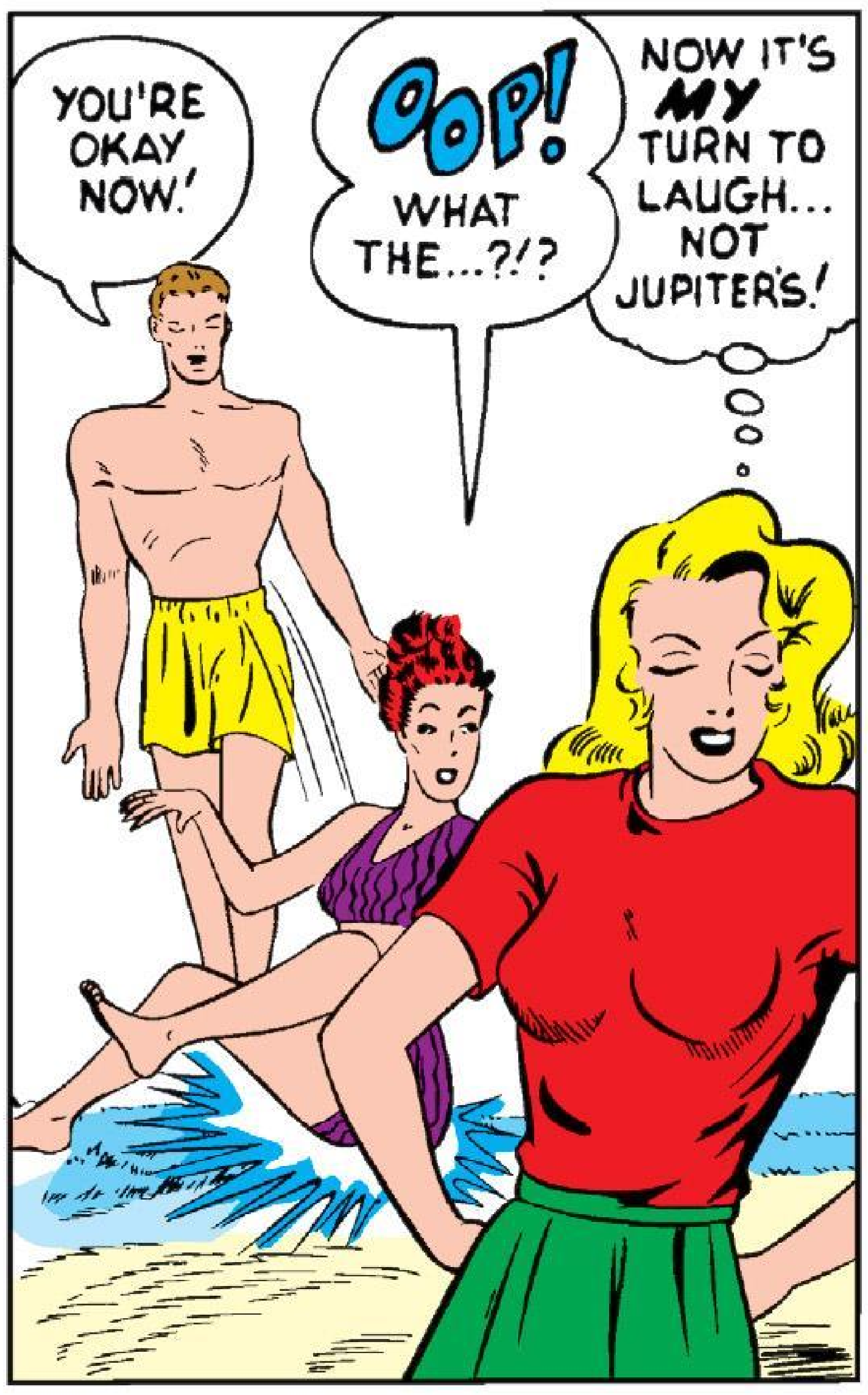

DANNY, ARE YOU GOING TO LET ME GO INTO ALL THAT BIG WATER ALONE?
ER... AH... I DON'T FEEL LIKE SWIMMING, RONA! MEG, ARE YOU HAVING FUN?
SURE, DARLING, AS LONG AS YOU'RE HERE!
OH, WHITNEY... I'LL BE BACK WITH YOU SOON... I HOPE! UNLESS...
DOES VENUS SENSE THE TROUBLES THAT THREATEN HER MEG AND DANNY?

SUDDENLY AN AGONIZED CRY RINGS OUT!

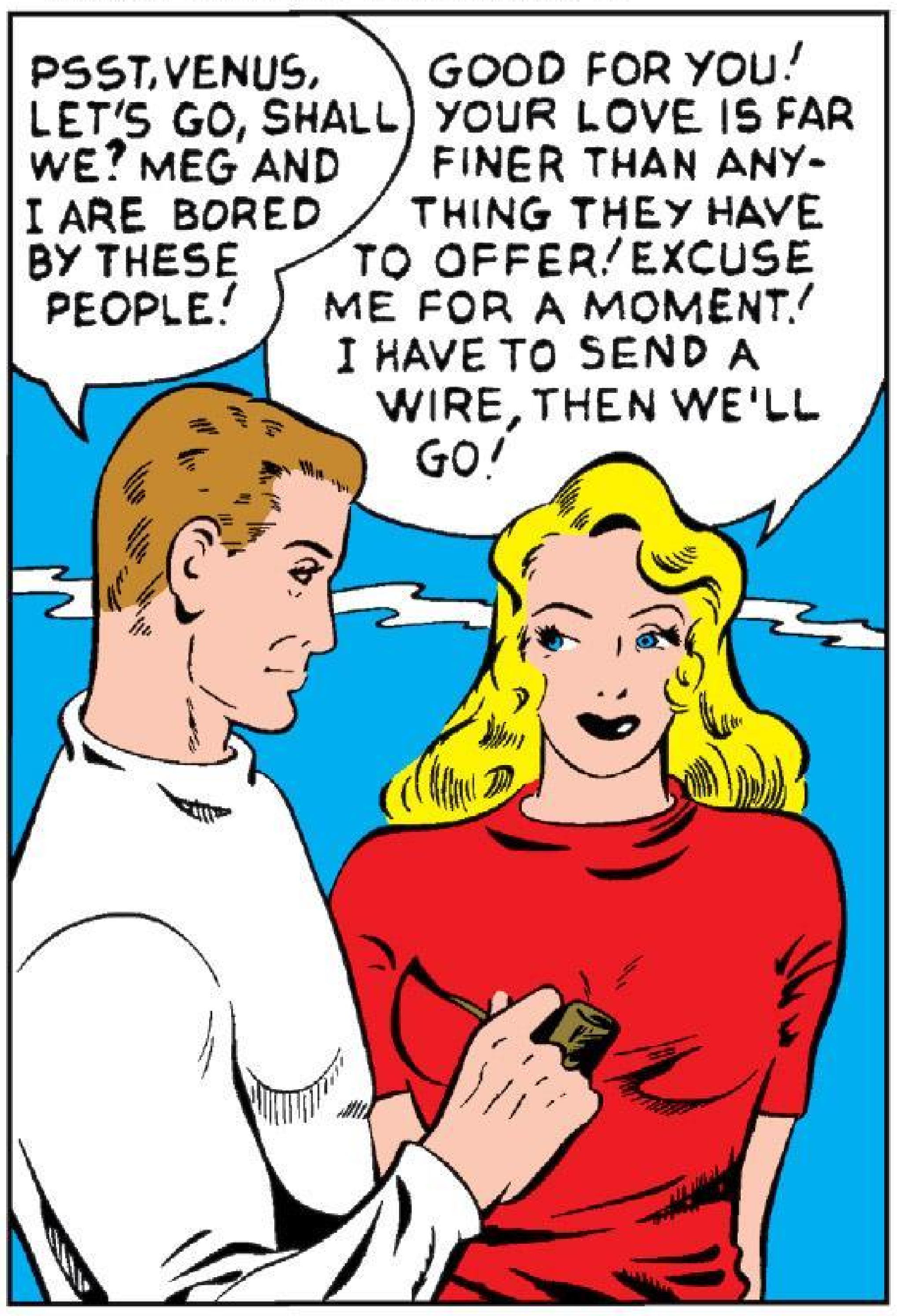

HELP!
SACRÉ! IT EES RONA! ... AND I CANNOT SWEEM!
OH, DANNY! SAVE HER!
I'LL TRY! ONE SIDE, RENÉE!


AND AS DANNY PLUNGES INTO THE SEA, THE ECHO OF A LAUGH CAN BE HEARD ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE WAVES!
HA! HA! HO! HO! HA! HA! HA!
OH, DANNY! YOU GREAT BIG BRAVE MAN, YOU!
SAVE YOUR BREATH, RONA!
WHO'S LAUGHING?

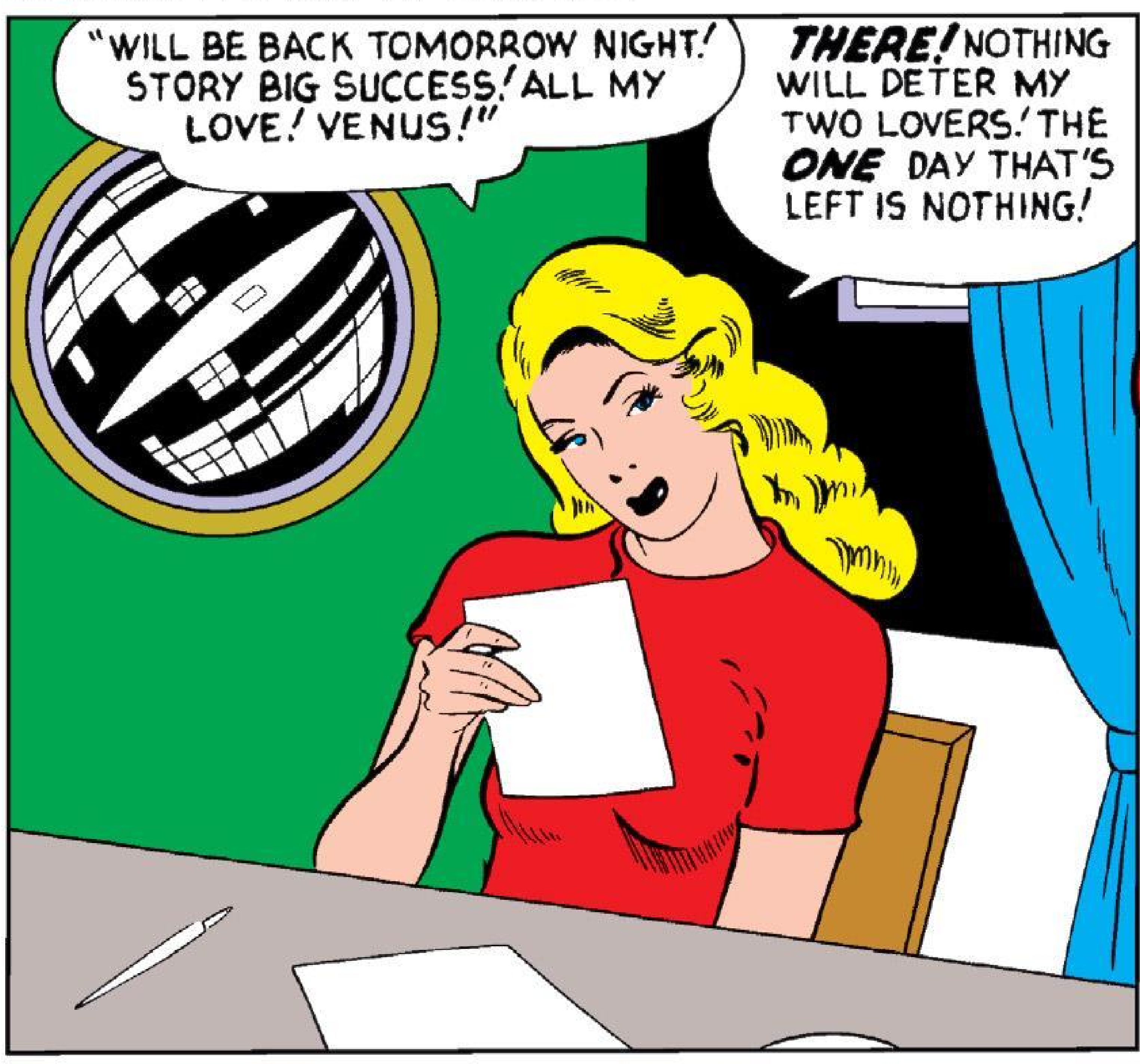

♪ OH-H-H-H DANNY! ♪♪
EASY, RONA! YOU'RE CHOKING ME!

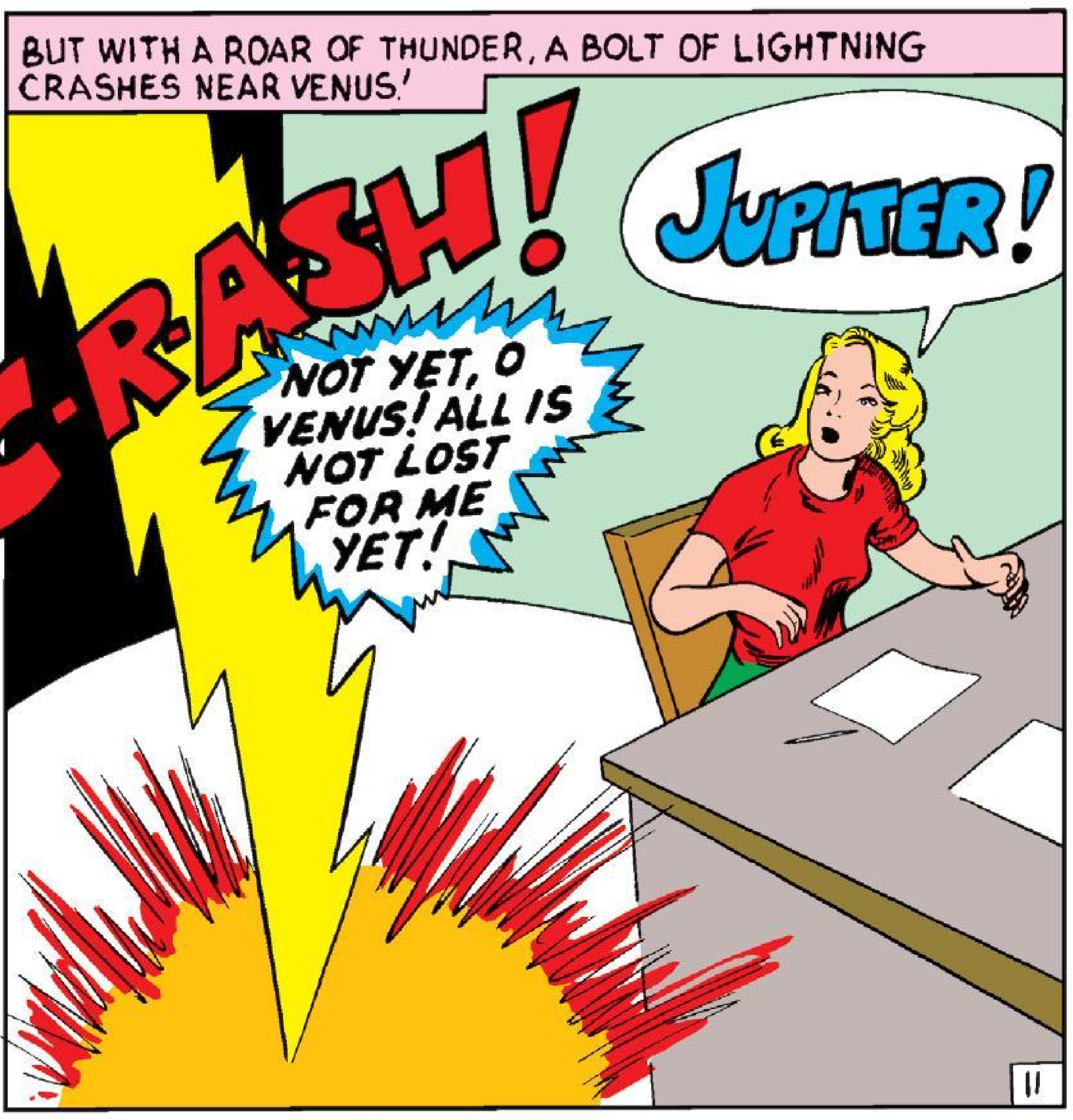

YOU'RE OKAY NOW!
OOP! WHAT THE...?!?
NOW IT'S MY TURN TO LAUGH... NOT JUPITER'S!

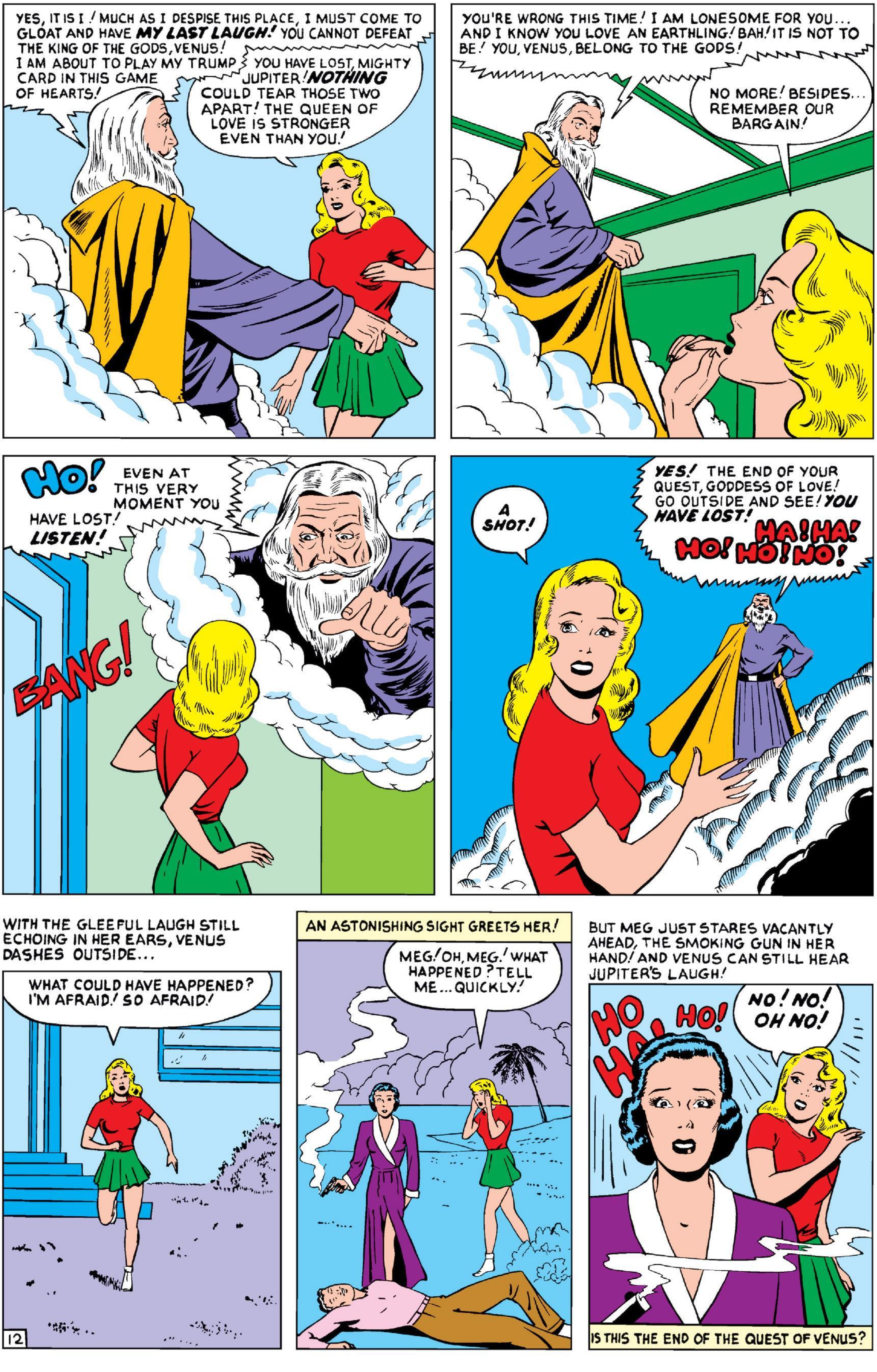
THEN, TOWARD EVENING...

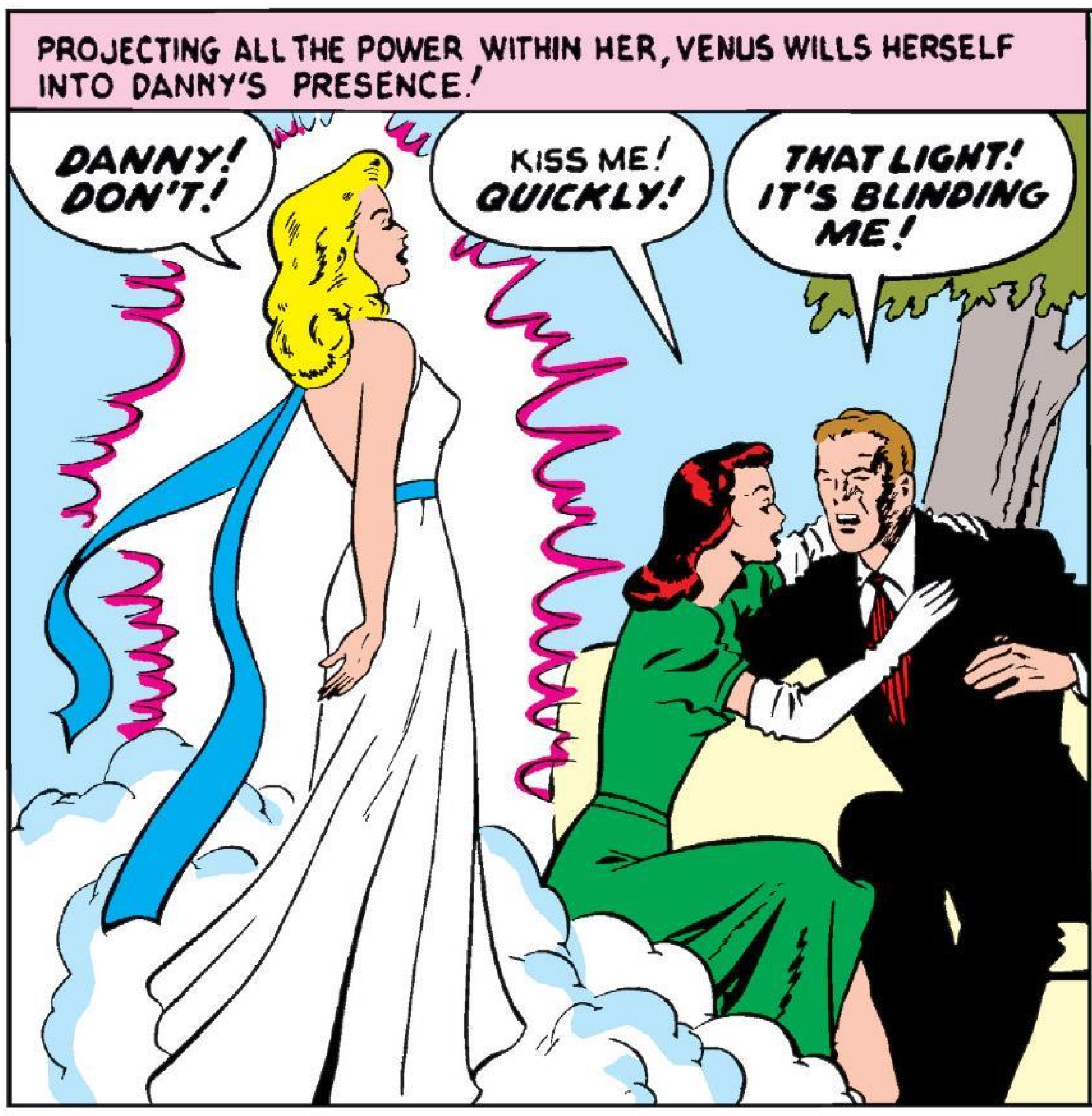

PSST, VENUS, LET'S GO, SHALL WE? MEG AND I ARE BORED BY THESE PEOPLE!
GOOD FOR YOU! YOUR LOVE IS FAR FINER THAN ANYTHING THEY HAVE TO OFFER! EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT! I HAVE TO SEND A WIRE, THEN WE'LL GO!

JOYFUL AT THE FAILURE OF RENÉE AND RONA TO SWAY MEG AND DANNY, VENUS GOES INTO THE CLUBHOUSE TO SEND A WIRE TO WHITNEY!


"WILL BE BACK TOMORROW NIGHT! STORY BIG SUCCESS! ALL MY LOVE! VENUS!"
THERE! NOTHING WILL DETER MY TWO LOVERS! THE ONE DAY THAT'S LEFT IS NOTHING!


BUT WITH A ROAR OF THUNDER, A BOLT OF LIGHTNING CRASHES NEAR VENUS!
C-R-A-S-H!
JUPITER!
NOT YET, O VENUS! ALL IS NOT LOST FOR ME YET!


YES, IT IS I! MUCH AS I DESPISE THIS PLACE, I MUST COME TO GLOAT AND HAVE **MY LAST LAUGH!** YOU CANNOT DEFEAT THE KING OF THE GODS, VENUS! I AM ABOUT TO PLAY MY TRUMP CARD IN THIS GAME OF HEARTS!
YOU HAVE LOST, MIGHTY JUPITER! **NOTHING** COULD TEAR THOSE TWO APART! THE QUEEN OF LOVE IS STRONGER EVEN THAN YOU!
YOU'RE WRONG THIS TIME! I AM LONESOME FOR YOU... AND I KNOW YOU LOVE AN EARTHLING! BAH! IT IS NOT TO BE! YOU, VENUS, BELONG TO THE GODS!
NO MORE! BESIDES... REMEMBER OUR BARGAIN!
HO! EVEN AT THIS VERY MOMENT YOU HAVE LOST! **LISTEN!**
BANG!
A SHOT!
YES! THE END OF YOUR QUEST, GODDESS OF LOVE! GO OUTSIDE AND SEE! **YOU HAVE LOST!** HA! HA! HO! HO! HO!
WITH THE GLEEFUL LAUGH STILL ECHOING IN HER EARS, VENUS DASHES OUTSIDE...
WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED? I'M AFRAID! SO AFRAID!
AN ASTONISHING SIGHT GREETS HER!
MEG! OH, MEG! WHAT HAPPENED? TELL ME... QUICKLY!
BUT MEG JUST STARES VACANTLY AHEAD, THE SMOKING GUN IN HER HAND! AND VENUS CAN STILL HEAR JUPITER'S LAUGH!
HO HA! HO!
NO! NO! OH NO!
IS THIS THE END OF THE QUEST OF VENUS?


PROJECTING ALL THE POWER WITHIN HER, VENUS WILLS HERSELF INTO DANNY'S PRESENCE.!
DANNY! DON'T!
KISS ME! QUICKLY!
THAT LIGHT! IT'S BLINDING ME!

VENUS

"THE END OF THE QUEST!"

CHAPTER 3

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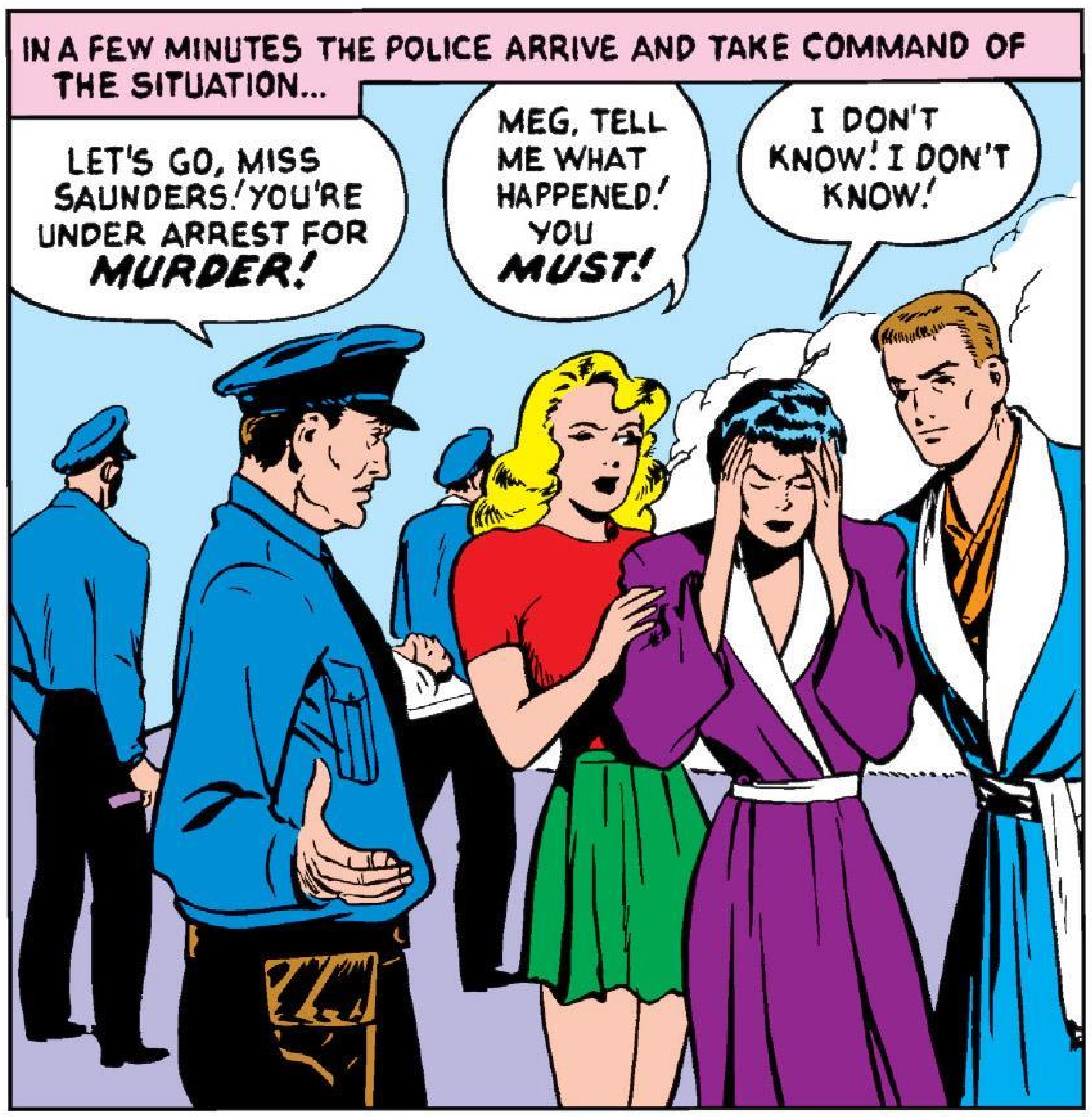
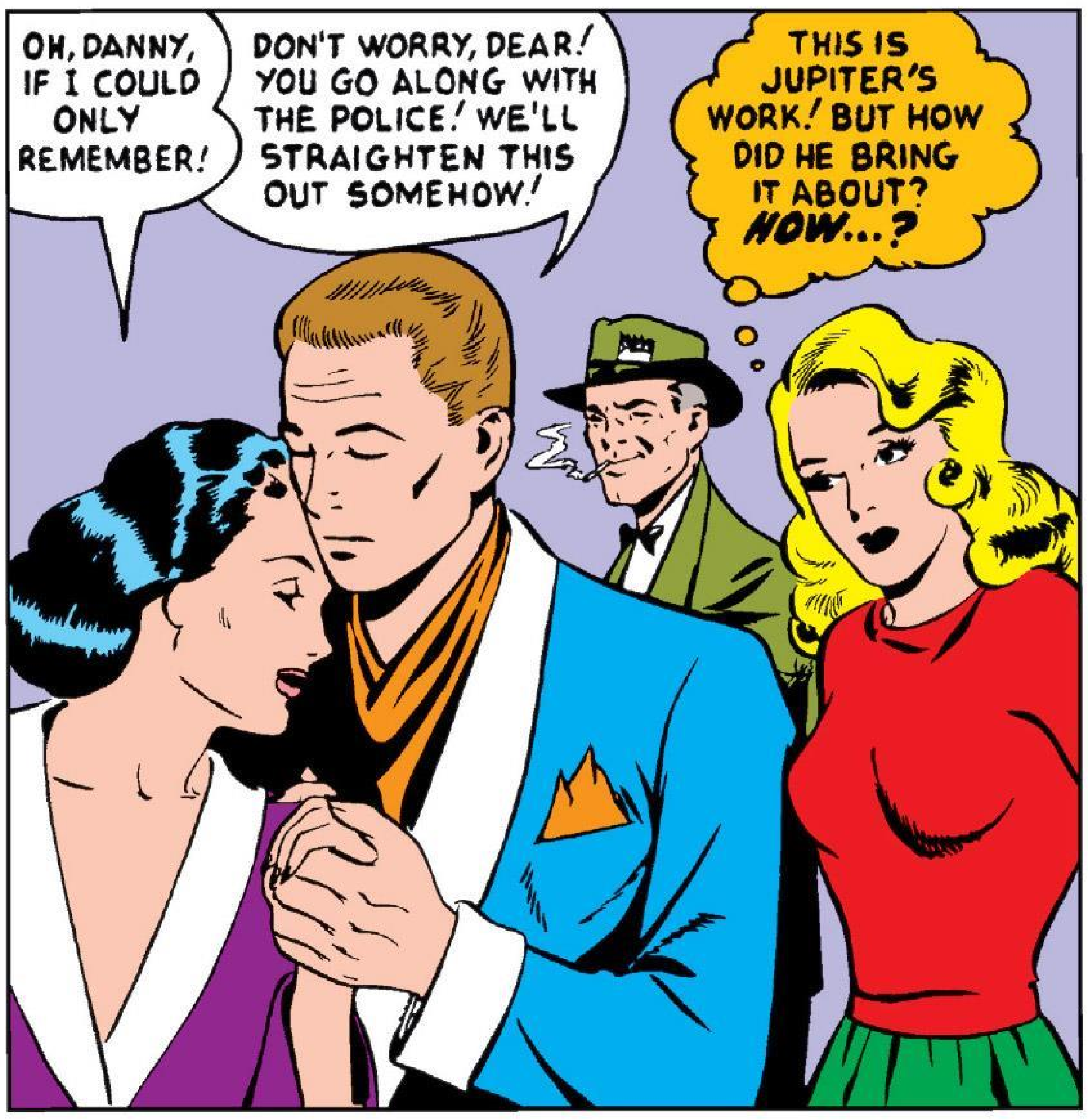
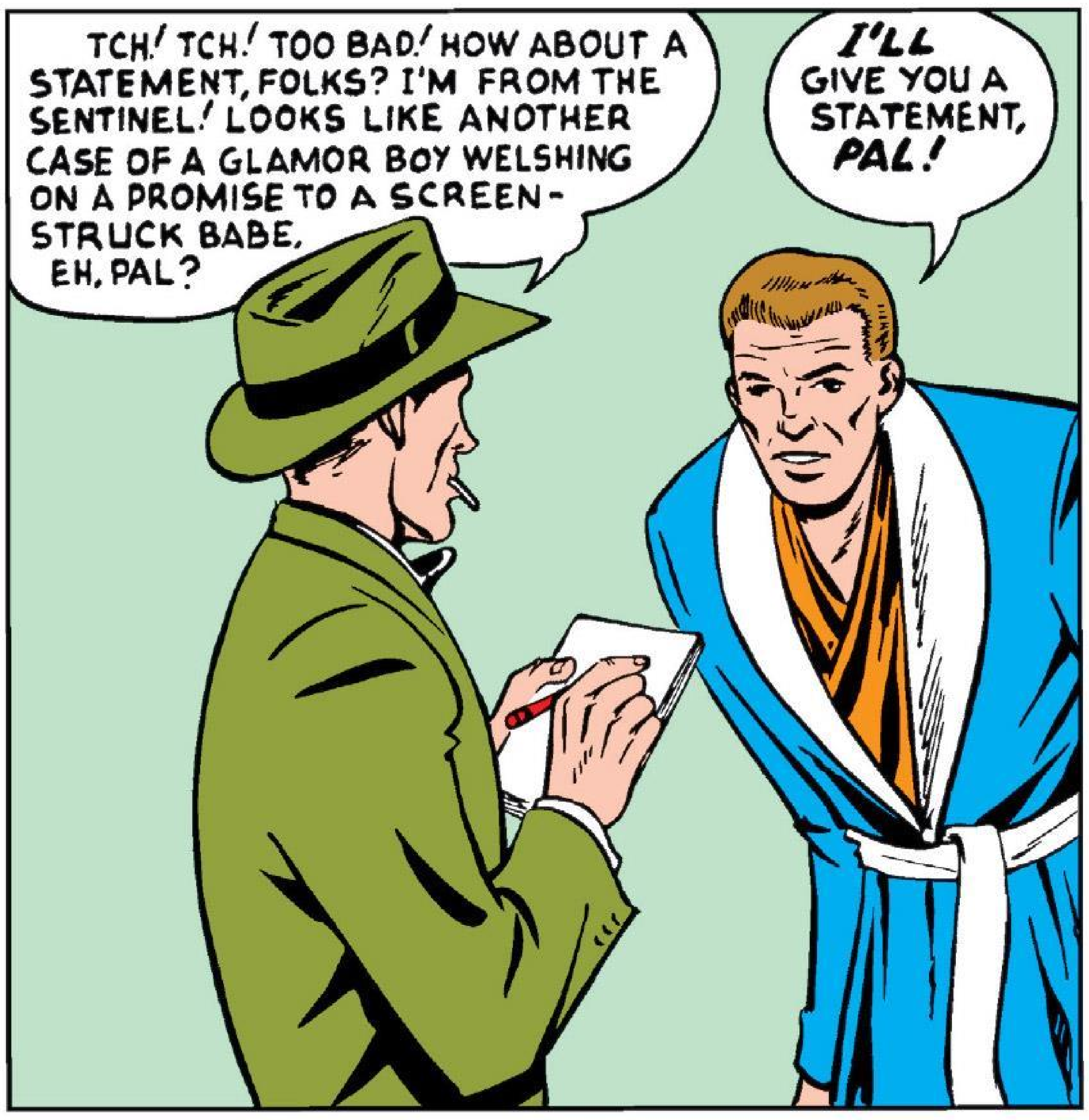
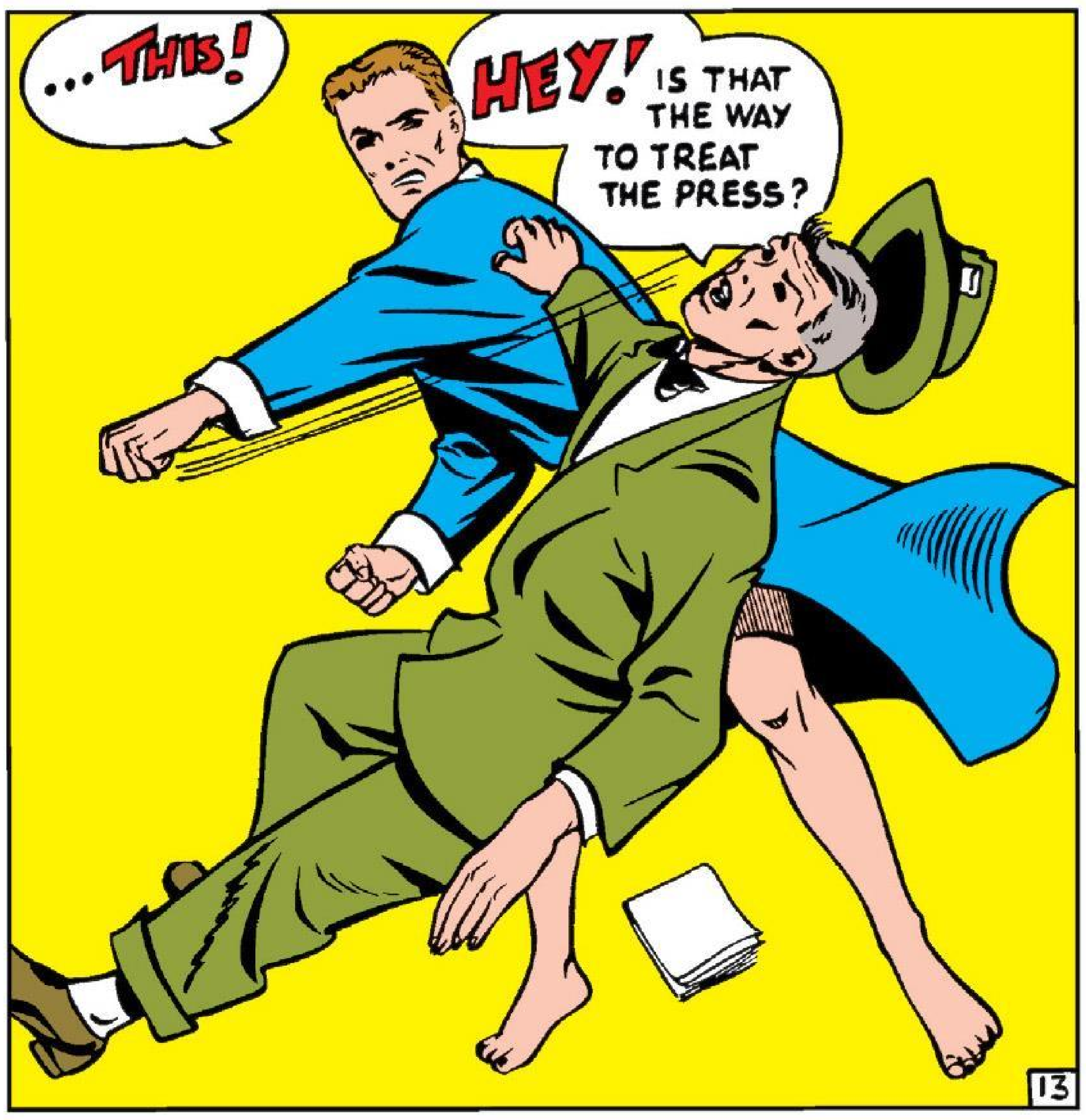
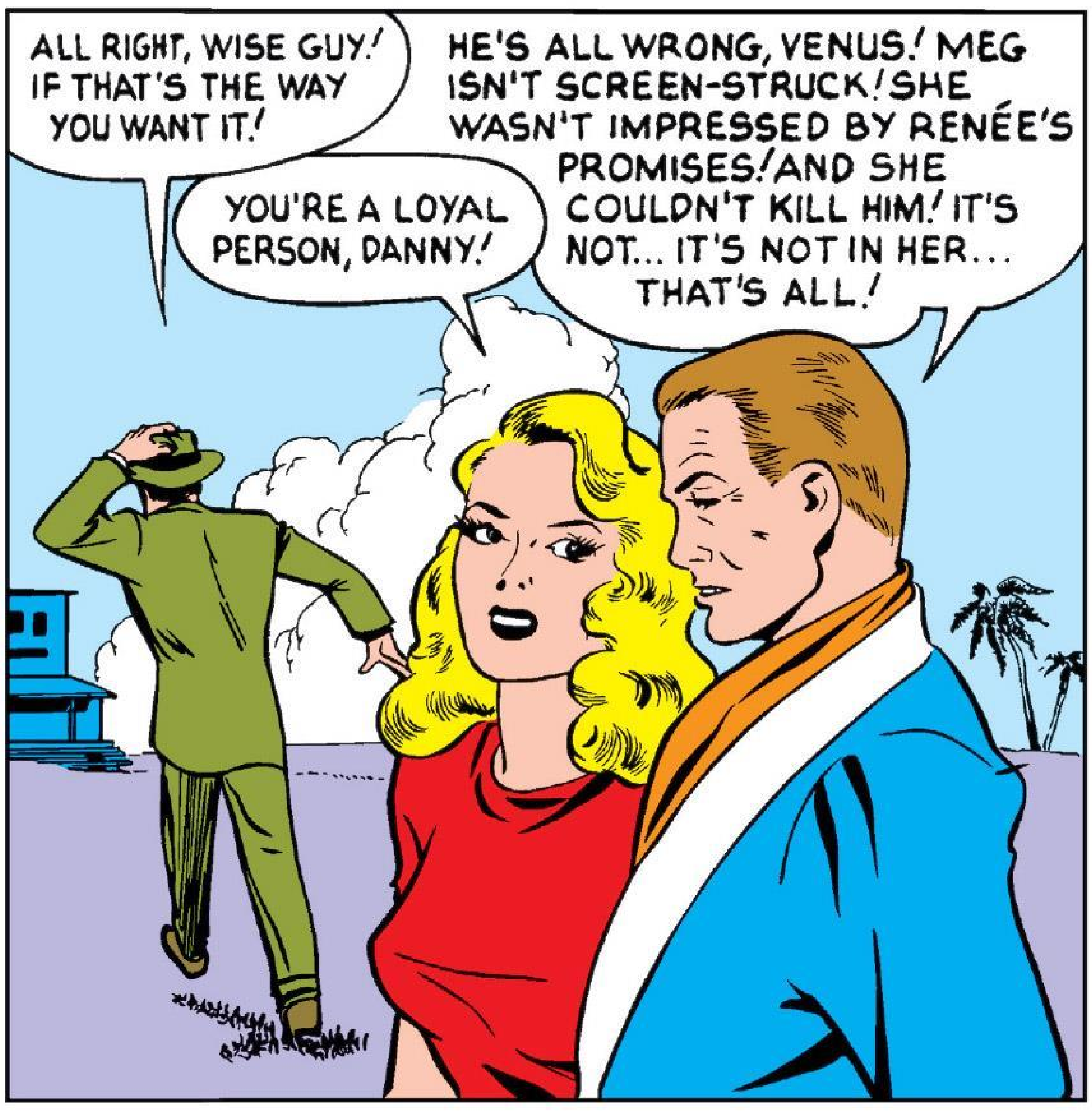
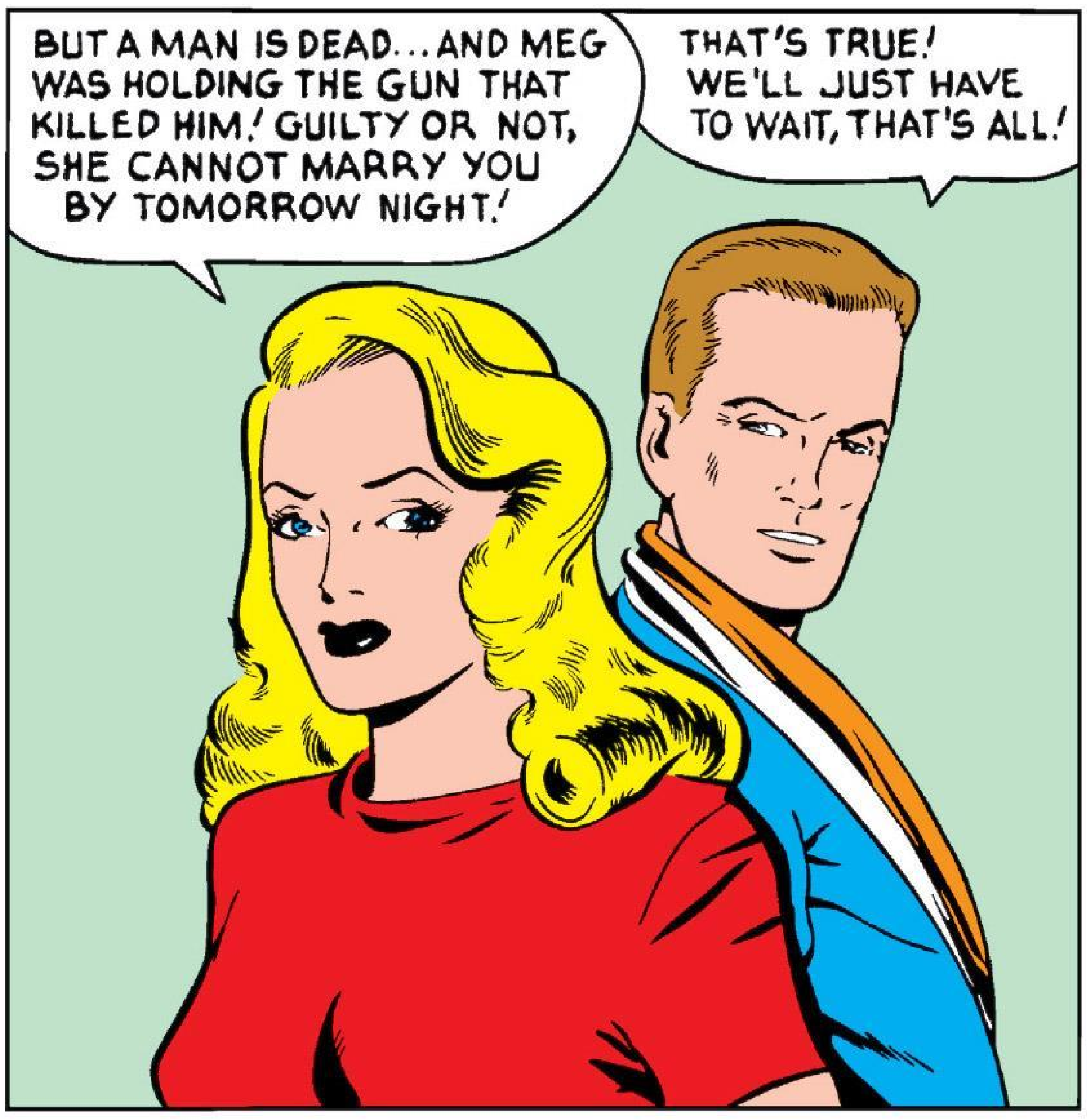

IN A FEW MINUTES THE POLICE ARRIVE AND TAKE COMMAND OF THE SITUATION...
LET'S GO, MISS SAUNDERS! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR MURDER!
MEG, TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED! YOU MUST!
I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T KNOW!

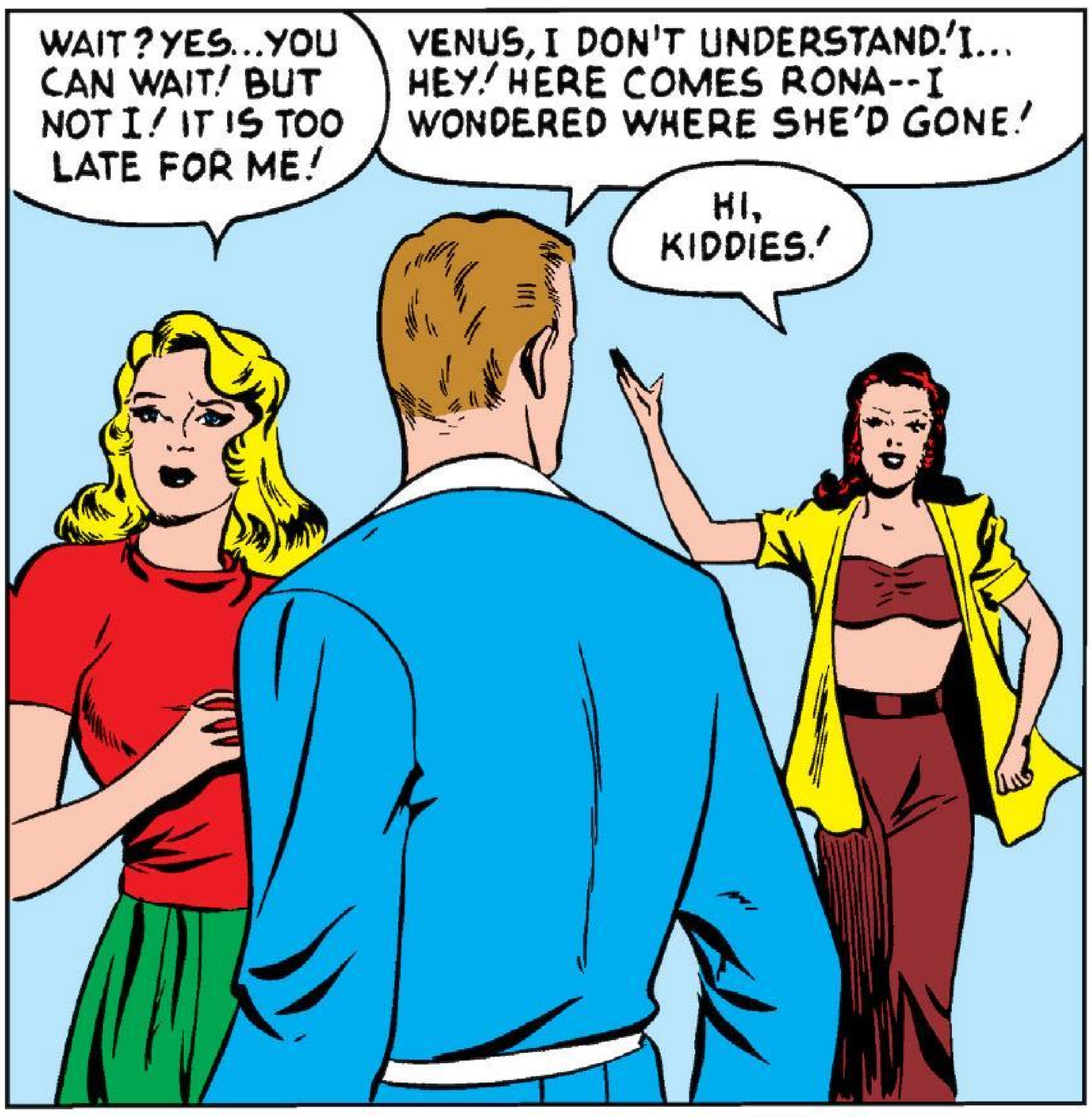

OH, DANNY, IF I COULD ONLY REMEMBER!
DON'T WORRY, DEAR! YOU GO ALONG WITH THE POLICE! WE'LL STRAIGHTEN THIS OUT SOMEHOW!
THIS IS JUPITER'S WORK! BUT HOW DID HE BRING IT ABOUT? HOW...?

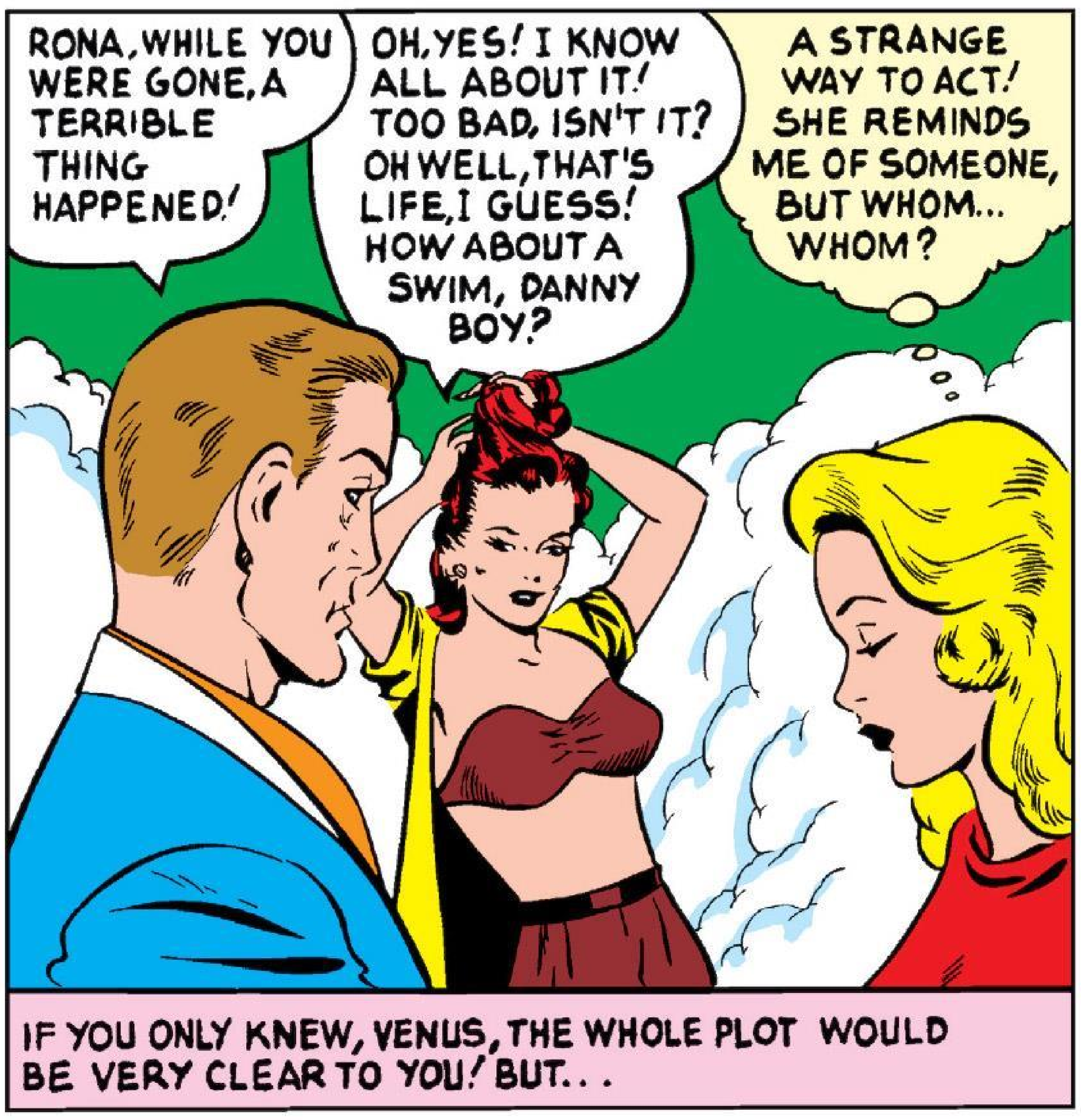

TCH! TCH! TOO BAD! HOW ABOUT A STATEMENT, FOLKS? I'M FROM THE SENTINEL! LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER CASE OF A GLAMOR BOY WELSHING ON A PROMISE TO A SCREEN-STRUCK BABE, EH, PAL?
I'LL GIVE YOU A STATEMENT, PAL!

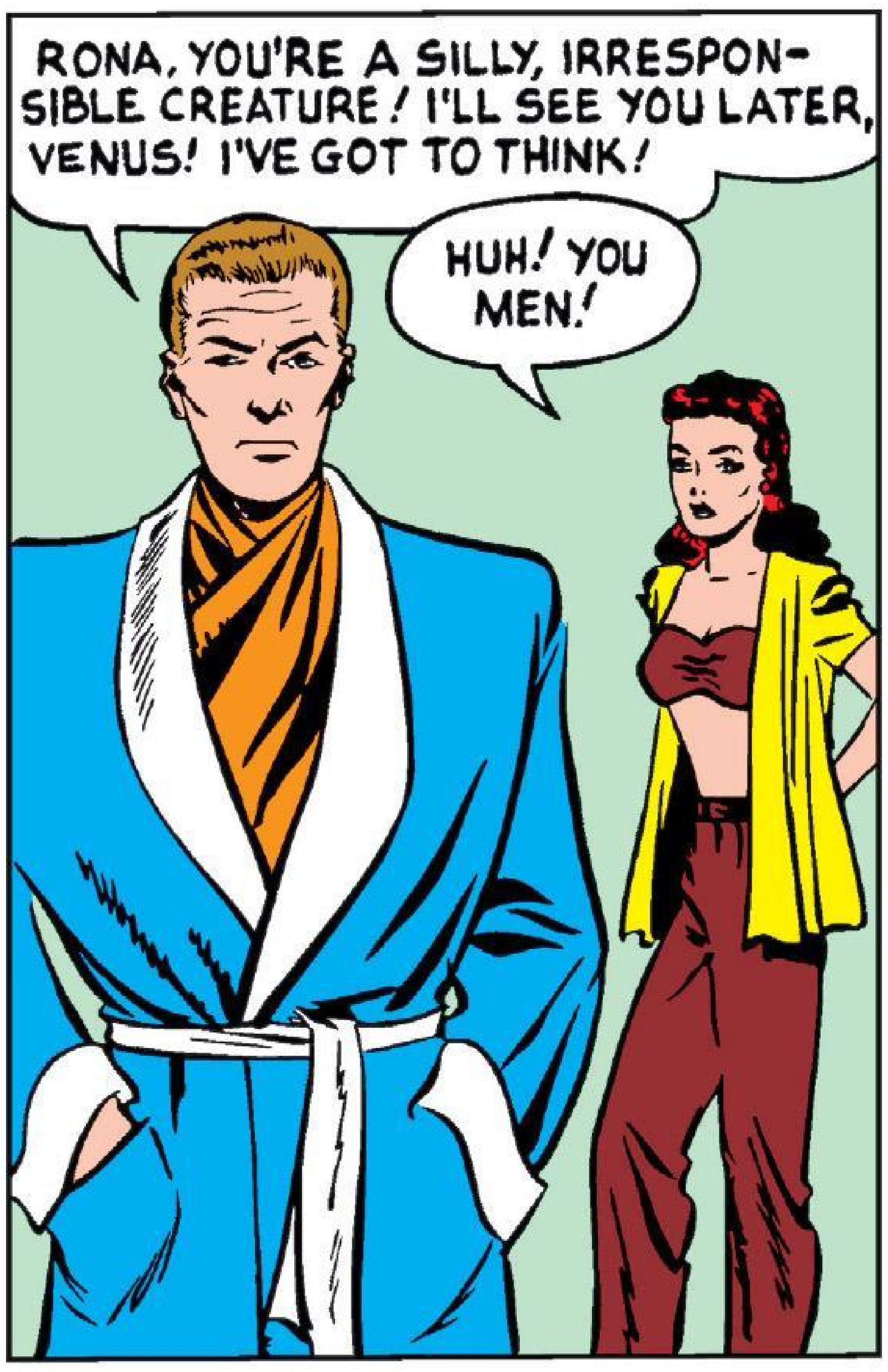

...THIS!
HEY! IS THAT THE WAY TO TREAT THE PRESS?

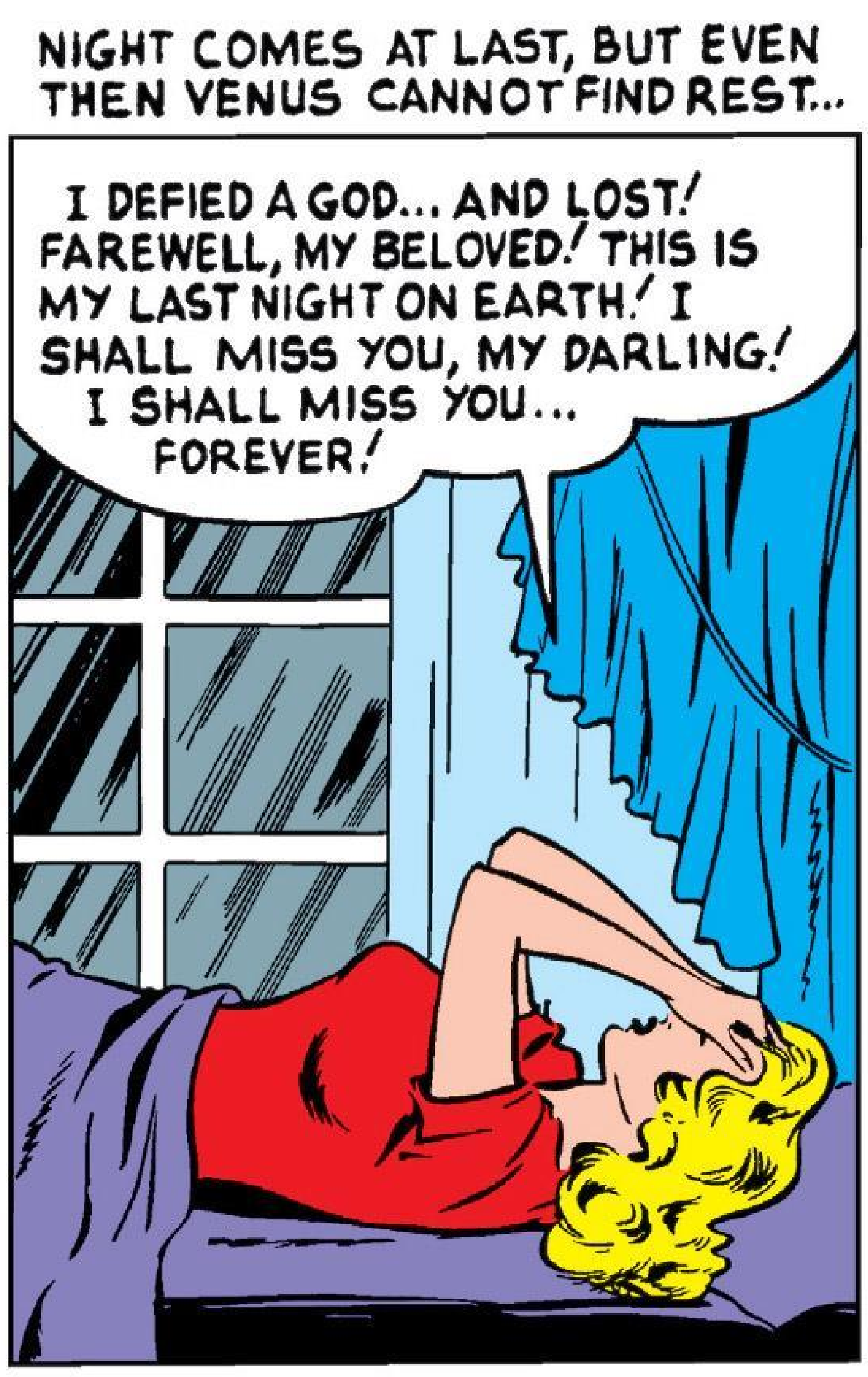

ALL RIGHT, WISE GUY! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT!
YOU'RE A LOYAL PERSON, DANNY!
HE'S ALL WRONG, VENUS! MEG ISN'T SCREEN-STRUCK! SHE WASN'T IMPRESSED BY RENÉE'S PROMISES! AND SHE COULDN'T KILL HIM! IT'S NOT... IT'S NOT IN HER... THAT'S ALL!

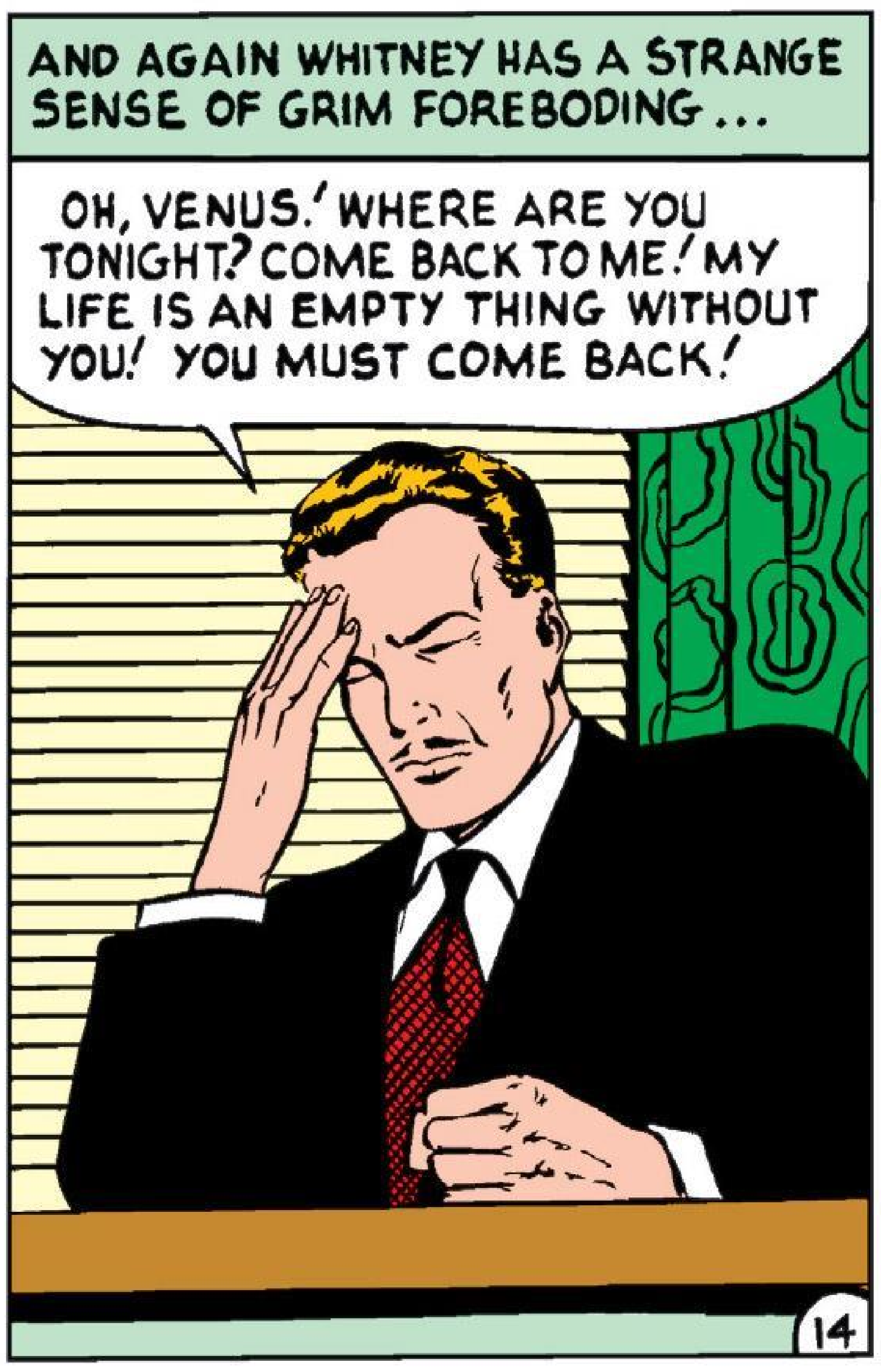

BUT A MAN IS DEAD... AND MEG WAS HOLDING THE GUN THAT KILLED HIM! GUILTY OR NOT, SHE CANNOT MARRY YOU BY TOMORROW NIGHT!
THAT'S TRUE! WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT, THAT'S ALL!

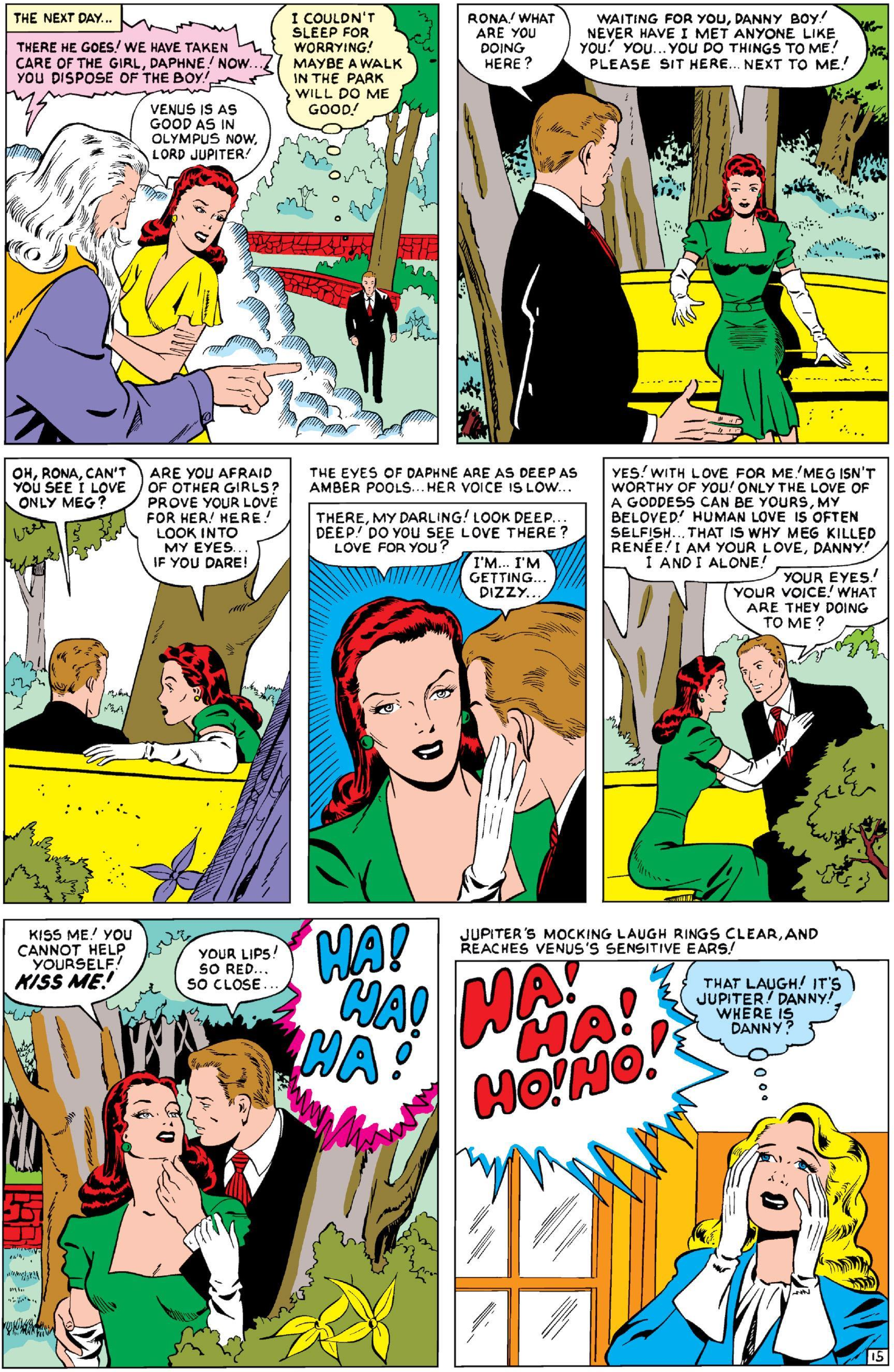

WAIT? YES... YOU CAN WAIT! BUT NOT I! IT IS TOO LATE FOR ME!
VENUS, I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I... HEY! HERE COMES RONA--I WONDERED WHERE SHE'D GONE!
HI, KIDDIES!

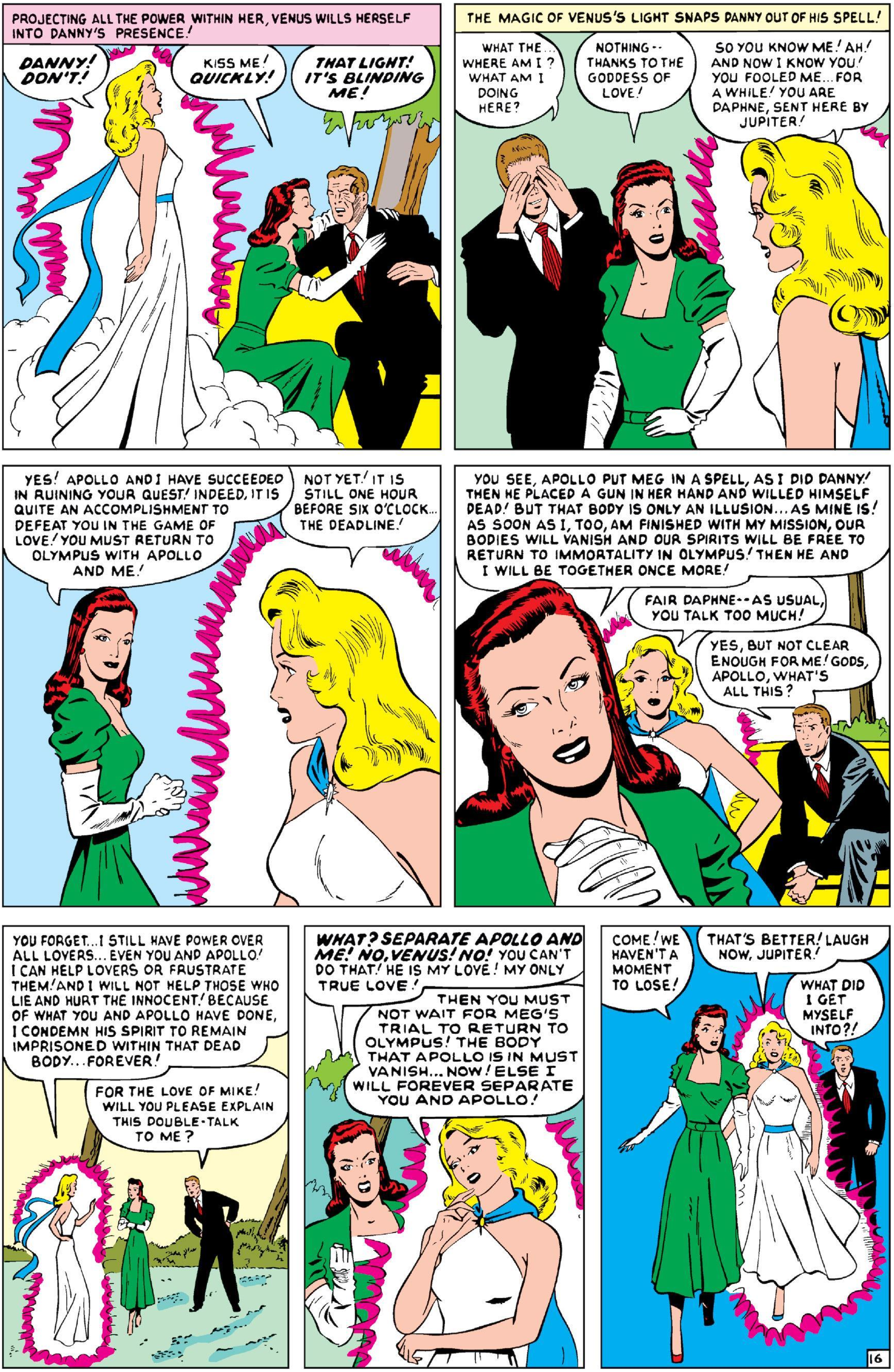

RONA, WHILE YOU WERE GONE, A TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED!
OH, YES! I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT! TOO BAD, ISN'T IT? OH WELL, THAT'S LIFE, I GUESS! HOW ABOUT A SWIM, DANNY BOY?
A STRANGE WAY TO ACT! SHE REMINDS ME OF SOMEONE, BUT WHOM... WHOM?
IF YOU ONLY KNEW, VENUS, THE WHOLE PLOT WOULD BE VERY CLEAR TO YOU! BUT...

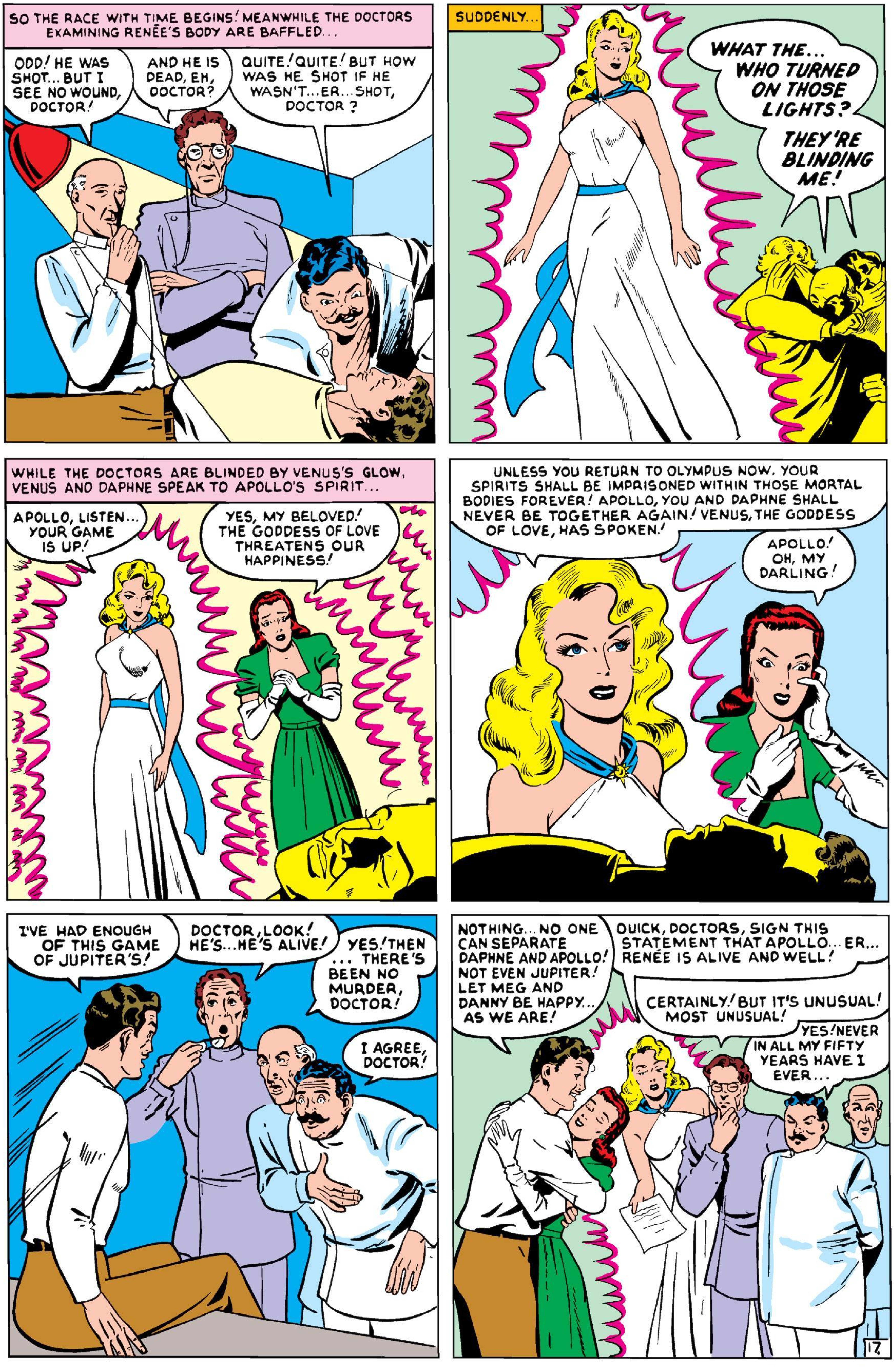

RONA, YOU'RE A SILLY, IRRESPONSIBLE CREATURE! I'LL SEE YOU LATER, VENUS! I'VE GOT TO THINK!
HUH! YOU MEN!

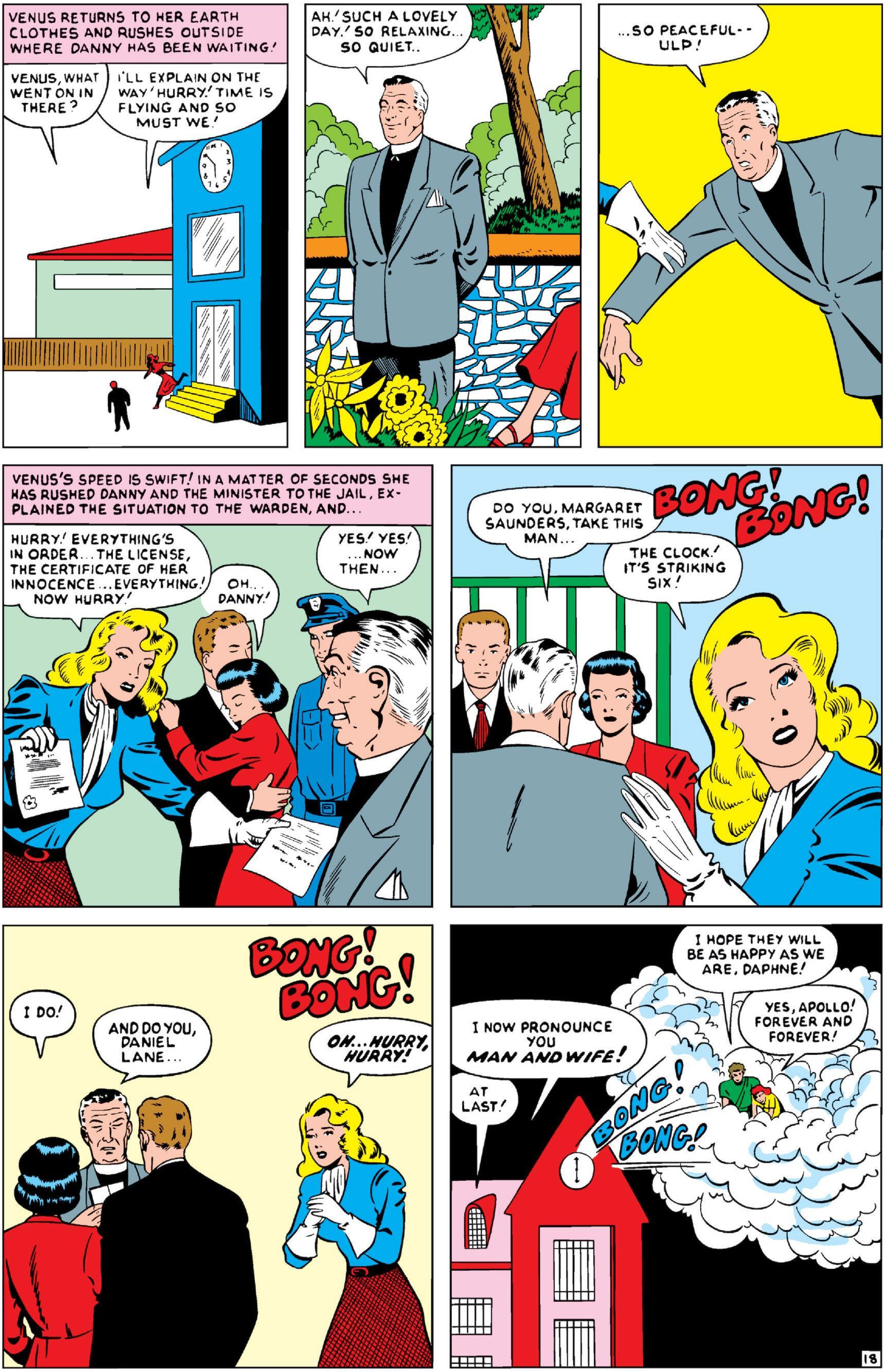

NIGHT COMES AT LAST, BUT EVEN THEN VENUS CANNOT FIND REST...
I DEFIED A GOD... AND LOST! FAREWELL, MY BELOVED! THIS IS MY LAST NIGHT ON EARTH! I SHALL MISS YOU, MY DARLING! I SHALL MISS YOU... FOREVER!

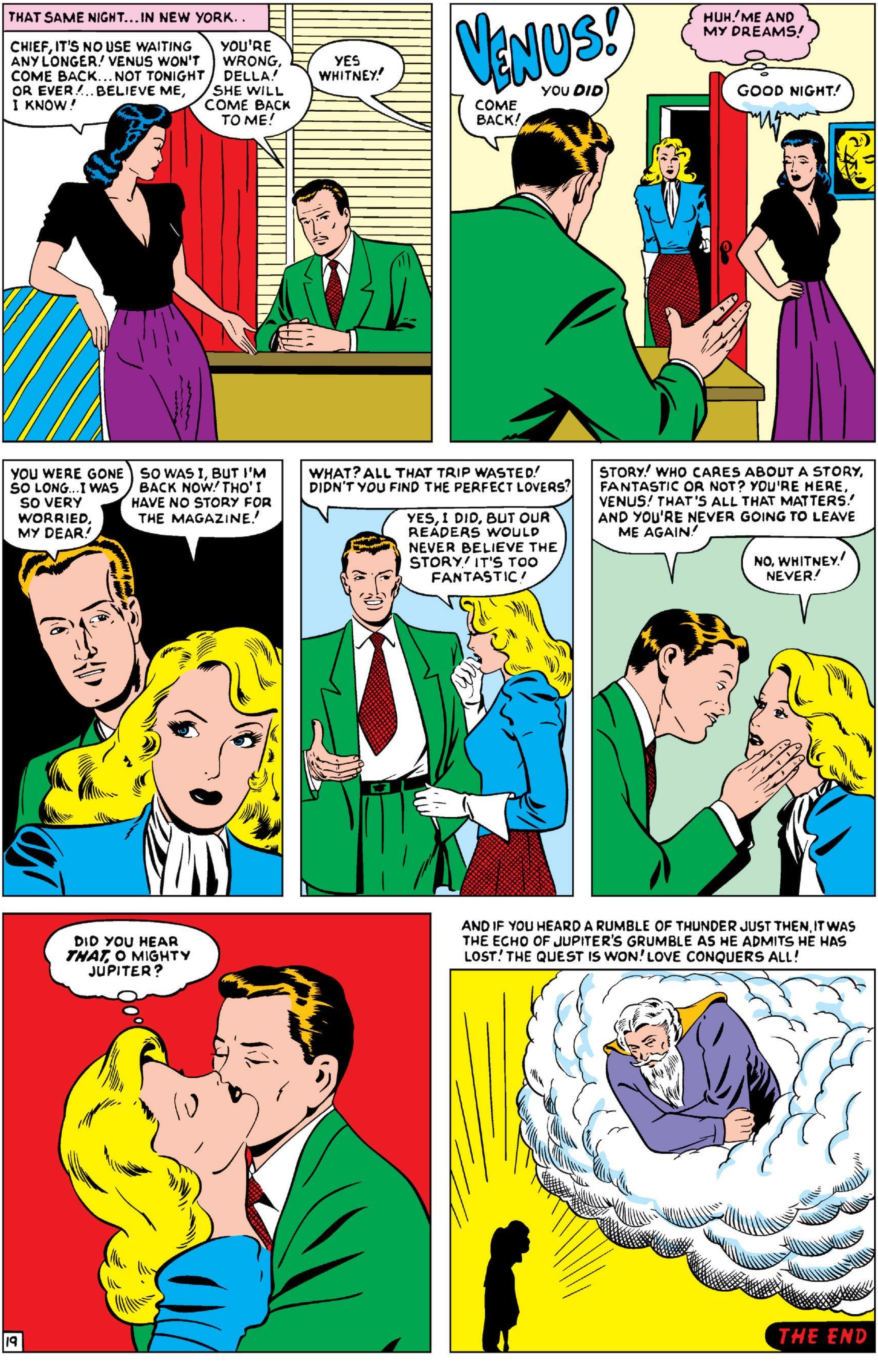

AND AGAIN WHITNEY HAS A STRANGE SENSE OF GRIM FOREBODING...
OH, VENUS! WHERE ARE YOU TONIGHT? COME BACK TO ME! MY LIFE IS AN EMPTY THING WITHOUT YOU! YOU MUST COME BACK!


THE NEXT DAY...
THERE HE GOES! WE HAVE TAKEN CARE OF THE GIRL, DAPHNE! NOW... YOU DISPOSE OF THE BOY!
I COULDN'T SLEEP FOR WORRYING! MAYBE A WALK IN THE PARK WILL DO ME GOOD!
VENUS IS AS GOOD AS IN OLYMPUS NOW, LORD JUPITER!
RONA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WAITING FOR YOU, DANNY BOY! NEVER HAVE I MET ANYONE LIKE YOU! YOU... YOU DO THINGS TO ME! PLEASE SIT HERE... NEXT TO ME!
OH, RONA, CAN'T YOU SEE I LOVE ONLY MEG?
ARE YOU AFRAID OF OTHER GIRLS? PROVE YOUR LOVE FOR HER! HERE! LOOK INTO MY EYES... IF YOU DARE!
THE EYES OF DAPHNE ARE AS DEEP AS AMBER POOLS... HER VOICE IS LOW...
THERE, MY DARLING! LOOK DEEP... DEEP! DO YOU SEE LOVE THERE? LOVE FOR YOU?
I'M... I'M GETTING... DIZZY...
YES! WITH LOVE FOR ME! MEG ISN'T WORTHY OF YOU! ONLY THE LOVE OF A GODDESS CAN BE YOURS, MY BELOVED! HUMAN LOVE IS OFTEN SELFISH... THAT IS WHY MEG KILLED RENÉE! I AM YOUR LOVE, DANNY! I AND I ALONE!
YOUR EYES! YOUR VOICE! WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO ME?
KISS ME! YOU CANNOT HELP YOURSELF! KISS ME!
YOUR LIPS! SO RED... SO CLOSE...
HA! HA! HA!
JUPITER'S MOCKING LAUGH RINGS CLEAR, AND REACHES VENUS'S SENSITIVE EARS!
HA! HA! HO! HO!
THAT LAUGH! IT'S JUPITER! DANNY! WHERE IS DANNY?


PROJECTING ALL THE POWER WITHIN HER, VENUS WILLS HERSELF INTO DANNY'S PRESENCE!
DANNY! DON'T!
KISS ME! QUICKLY!
THAT LIGHT! IT'S BLINDING ME!
THE MAGIC OF VENUS'S LIGHT SNAPS DANNY OUT OF HIS SPELL!
WHAT THE... WHERE AM I? WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
NOTHING-- THANKS TO THE GODDESS OF LOVE!
SO YOU KNOW ME! AH! AND NOW I KNOW YOU! YOU FOOLED ME... FOR A WHILE! YOU ARE DAPHNE, SENT HERE BY JUPITER!
YES! APOLLO AND I HAVE SUCCEEDED IN RUINING YOUR QUEST! INDEED, IT IS QUITE AN ACCOMPLISHMENT TO DEFEAT YOU IN THE GAME OF LOVE! YOU MUST RETURN TO OLYMPUS WITH APOLLO AND ME!
NOT YET! IT IS STILL ONE HOUR BEFORE SIX O'CLOCK... THE DEADLINE!
YOU SEE, APOLLO PUT MEG IN A SPELL, AS I DID DANNY! THEN HE PLACED A GUN IN HER HAND AND WILLED HIMSELF DEAD! BUT THAT BODY IS ONLY AN ILLUSION... AS MINE IS! AS SOON AS I, TOO, AM FINISHED WITH MY MISSION, OUR BODIES WILL VANISH AND OUR SPIRITS WILL BE FREE TO RETURN TO IMMORTALITY IN OLYMPUS! THEN HE AND I WILL BE TOGETHER ONCE MORE!
FAIR DAPHNE--AS USUAL, YOU TALK TOO MUCH!
YES, BUT NOT CLEAR ENOUGH FOR ME! GODS, APOLLO, WHAT'S ALL THIS?
YOU FORGET... I STILL HAVE POWER OVER ALL LOVERS... EVEN YOU AND APOLLO! I CAN HELP LOVERS OR FRUSTRATE THEM! AND I WILL NOT HELP THOSE WHO LIE AND HURT THE INNOCENT! BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU AND APOLLO HAVE DONE, I CONDEMN HIS SPIRIT TO REMAIN IMPRISONED WITHIN THAT DEAD BODY... FOREVER!
FOR THE LOVE OF MIKE! WILL YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS DOUBLE-TALK TO ME?
WHAT? SEPARATE APOLLO AND ME! NO, VENUS! NO! YOU CAN'T DO THAT! HE IS MY LOVE! MY ONLY TRUE LOVE!
THEN YOU MUST NOT WAIT FOR MEG'S TRIAL TO RETURN TO OLYMPUS! THE BODY THAT APOLLO IS IN MUST VANISH... NOW! ELSE I WILL FOREVER SEPARATE YOU AND APOLLO!
COME! WE HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE!
THAT'S BETTER! LAUGH NOW, JUPITER!
WHAT DID I GET MYSELF INTO?!


SO THE RACE WITH TIME BEGINS! MEANWHILE THE DOCTORS EXAMINING RENÉE'S BODY ARE BAFFLED...
ODD! HE WAS SHOT... BUT I SEE NO WOUND, DOCTOR!
AND HE IS DEAD, EH, DOCTOR?
QUITE! QUITE! BUT HOW WAS HE SHOT IF HE WASN'T...ER...SHOT, DOCTOR?
SUDDENLY...
WHAT THE... WHO TURNED ON THOSE LIGHTS?
THEY'RE BLINDING ME!
WHILE THE DOCTORS ARE BLINDED BY VENUS'S GLOW, VENUS AND DAPHNE SPEAK TO APOLLO'S SPIRIT...
APOLLO, LISTEN... YOUR GAME IS UP!
YES, MY BELOVED! THE GODDESS OF LOVE THREATENS OUR HAPPINESS!
UNLESS YOU RETURN TO OLYMPUS NOW, YOUR SPIRITS SHALL BE IMPRISONED WITHIN THOSE MORTAL BODIES FOREVER! APOLLO, YOU AND DAPHNE SHALL NEVER BE TOGETHER AGAIN! VENUS, THE GODDESS OF LOVE, HAS SPOKEN!
APOLLO! OH, MY DARLING!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS GAME OF JUPITER'S!
DOCTOR, LOOK! HE'S...HE'S ALIVE!
YES! THEN ... THERE'S BEEN NO MURDER, DOCTOR!
I AGREE, DOCTOR!
NOTHING... NO ONE CAN SEPARATE DAPHNE AND APOLLO! NOT EVEN JUPITER! LET MEG AND DANNY BE HAPPY... AS WE ARE!
QUICK, DOCTORS, SIGN THIS STATEMENT THAT APOLLO... ER... RENÉE IS ALIVE AND WELL!
CERTAINLY! BUT IT'S UNUSUAL! MOST UNUSUAL!
YES! NEVER IN ALL MY FIFTY YEARS HAVE I EVER...


VENUS RETURNS TO HER EARTH CLOTHES AND RUSHES OUTSIDE WHERE DANNY HAS BEEN WAITING!
VENUS, WHAT WENT ON IN THERE?
I'LL EXPLAIN ON THE WAY! HURRY! TIME IS FLYING AND SO MUST WE!
AH! SUCH A LOVELY DAY! SO RELAXING... SO QUIET..
...SO PEACEFUL-- ULP!
VENUS'S SPEED IS SWIFT! IN A MATTER OF SECONDS SHE HAS RUSHED DANNY AND THE MINISTER TO THE JAIL, EXPLAINED THE SITUATION TO THE WARDEN, AND...
HURRY! EVERYTHING'S IN ORDER... THE LICENSE, THE CERTIFICATE OF HER INNOCENCE... EVERYTHING! NOW HURRY!
OH... DANNY!
YES! YES! ...NOW THEN...
DO YOU, MARGARET SAUNDERS, TAKE THIS MAN...
BONG! BONG!
THE CLOCK! IT'S STRIKING SIX!
BONG! BONG!
I DO!
AND DO YOU, DANIEL LANE...
OH... HURRY, HURRY!
I HOPE THEY WILL BE AS HAPPY AS WE ARE, DAPHNE!
YES, APOLLO! FOREVER AND FOREVER!
I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!
AT LAST!
BONG! BONG!


THAT SAME NIGHT... IN NEW YORK..
CHIEF, IT'S NO USE WAITING ANY LONGER! VENUS WON'T COME BACK... NOT TONIGHT OR EVER!... BELIEVE ME, I KNOW!
YOU'RE WRONG, DELLA! SHE WILL COME BACK TO ME!
YES WHITNEY!
VENUS!
YOU DID COME BACK!
HUH! ME AND MY DREAMS!
GOOD NIGHT!
YOU WERE GONE SO LONG... I WAS SO VERY WORRIED, MY DEAR!
SO WAS I, BUT I'M BACK NOW! THO' I HAVE NO STORY FOR THE MAGAZINE!
WHAT? ALL THAT TRIP WASTED! DIDN'T YOU FIND THE PERFECT LOVERS?
YES, I DID, BUT OUR READERS WOULD NEVER BELIEVE THE STORY! IT'S TOO FANTASTIC!
STORY! WHO CARES ABOUT A STORY, FANTASTIC OR NOT? YOU'RE HERE, VENUS! THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS! AND YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO LEAVE ME AGAIN!
NO, WHITNEY! NEVER!
DID YOU HEAR *THAT,* O MIGHTY JUPITER?
AND IF YOU HEARD A RUMBLE OF THUNDER JUST THEN, IT WAS THE ECHO OF JUPITER'S GRUMBLE AS HE ADMITS HE HAS LOST! THE QUEST IS WON! LOVE CONQUERS ALL!
THE END

STOLEN LOVE

HAL stopped the car and lit a cigarette. I watched him nervously. Wasn't he going to say something? Not even good-by? This was our last evening together, and my heart was breaking. Didn't Hal feel anything?

He finished his cigarette and flipped it out of the car window. Finally he spoke.

"Sandra, I'm going to ask you once more — then *never again*. Will you be my wife and come to New York with me?" He stared straight ahead as he waited for my answer.

"No, Hal." The words almost choked me. "I can't. You know my sister, Alice, is in love with you. I can't deliberately break her heart."

"But I have no intention of marrying Alice. Be sensible, Sandra. We love one another. Alice should Be old enough to understand that!"

His arms were suddenly around me and I felt his kisses on my face. His lips lingered on mine. I loved Hal so much it was almost like an ache inside me. "Hal—Hal, dear," I whispered.

"Darling, won't you say yes?" he asked hopefully.

"I can't! I would hate myself forever, and Alice would never forgive me. Neither would Mother or Dad. Everyone would hate me. They'd think I was no better than a thief!" I couldn't continue when I felt the tears streaming down my face.

"I haven't taken Alice out for a month. Surely your family must know something is wrong." Hal moved away from me.

"But they don't know I've been seeing you. Oh, Hal, I hate it as much as you do—meeting you on dark streets and hiding our love. It's like something stolen!"

"All right, Sandra," Hal said with determination. "Then you intend to ruin our lives just because Alice has a notion she loves me. It's ridiculous!" There was anger in his voice.

"It's *not* a notion! Alice has never loved anyone but you. All her life she's loved you—all through grade school and high school. Everyone in town expects you two to marry. Alice has never even looked at another man. How can I break her heart and tell her that I've fallen in love with the man she thinks she will marry some day?"

Hal started the car. "I'm leaving tomorrow morning. Don't come to the train. It's good-by tonight."

As we drove back to town I felt as if my life were ending. Saying no to Hal was like sentencing myself to death. I knew I would never love anyone else. It was ruining our lives, as he said: but how could I face a future of accusations from the sister I had always protected? Alice was such a little thing—the scholarly type, not pretty, very timid and she never had been popular. All my life I had arranged parties and dates for her. I used to laugh at her when we were children and she'd lisp that she loved Hal and intended to marry him when she grew up. The happiest day of my life was when Hal asked her to the Junior Prom.

Now this very protection for my little timid sister was breaking my heart and ruining my life. She didn't know Hal was leaving town. I would have to tell her tonight and see her happy eyes fill with sadness.

Hal let me out on a dark street a block away from my home. I stood beside the car feeling numb. I wasn't able to speak. "Hal." I whispered and he was at my side. We were locked in a farewell embrace.

"My sweet Sandra," he whispered. "Leaving you is the hardest thing I've ever had to do—but it must be this way. I can't stay in town and see you and want you so desperately. Good-by, my love, and always remember that I love you. Remember, too, that I understand."

"Oh, Hal, I knew you'd say those words before you left me. I was praying to hear them." He held me tenderly now and his kisses were sweet on my lips.

He moved toward the car, and it seemed as though I couldn't release his hand. Never again would I feel his hand in mine. Never again would his kisses rain on my face.

Then he was gone, and I heard the motor of his car echo down the street. "Good-by, my only love," I whispered, and walked slowly toward home. Somehow I would have to rearrange my life so that the ache of Hal's absence would be healed. "I must lose myself in work, so that I can forget the only man I've ever loved," I repeated over and over to the rhythm of my footsteps.

The house was dark. Mother and Dad were playing bridge with some friends, but where was Alice? She never went out. I always found her reading a book. She was a genuine bookworm. Fear filled my heart. Did Alice know about my love for Hal? Had she seen us and suspected? I couldn't bear to think of it. Little Alice, the child to be protected always . . .

I turned on the lights and sat down with the evening paper spread before me. The print danced before my eyes. I couldn't read. I could only think of Alice. Where was she? Why didn't she come home?

I heard laughter on the porch. It was Alice! Was it hysteria? I had never heard her laugh like that. I jumped up and ran to the door. She opened it and flew into the living room. I followed her with a pounding heart.

"Sandra, Sandra," she shouted happily as she slumped into a chair.

"What's wrong, Alice?" I asked and went over to her. Had she found out about Hal's leaving? Did she know I had been with him tonight?

"Sandra, I've been out with the most *wonderful* man in the world! He's the new librarian, Mr. Cronin. He—he asked me to marry him and I'm going to as soon as possible!" She laughed again.

I was stunned as I watched her. Was this an act? "You—you say Mr. Cronin asked you to marry him?"

"Yes, and don't look so shocked. I've been dating him for a month. Oh, Sandra, it's wonderful to be in love!"

"What about Hal?" I asked, trying hard not to show my feelings.

"Hal? Oh, he's a complete dud. I'll bet he's never read a book in his life. I've never really loved Hal. He was just someone to go out with and talk about when I didn't have dates." She stopped. "What's the matter, Sandra? Are you ill?"

My white face came to life again as I felt the blood coming back to it. "No, Alice, I'm not ill. I never felt better in my life!"

I ran out of the house and down the street toward Hal's home. I didn't care what his parents would think about me racing in at this hour. I didn't care about anything as I ran frantically down the street.

I flew up the steps to the porch. I had forgotten to wear a coat or to comb my hair. I knew my makeup was gone. I patted my blonde curls over my ears and straightened my dress. Just as I was reaching out to ring the bell, a hand caught my arm.

"Sandra!" Hal's voice was in my ears. "What's happened? Are you ill?"

I turned around and fell into his arms. "No, and you're the second person to ask me that tonight. Alice was the first. No, Hal, I'm not ill. I'm the happiest person in the world right now!"

I felt his reassuring hands on my shoulders and his calm voice trying to quiet me. Hal thought I was distraught—perhaps hysterical.

I pulled away and faced him with bright eyes. "Hal, Alice is in love and she's going to be married—and Hal, it isn't you!" Then I laughed, and all my pent-up tears flowed over my happy face: "Hal, we can be married now!" I fell into his arms again and sobbed.

Hal's arms tightened around me. "Sandra, Sandra! I couldn't go into the house tonight. I was waiting for you and you came. My own sweet Sandra. I'll change my train reservations and we'll get the license tomorrow—before you think up another barrier."

We looked deep into one another's eyes. "This is love—the only love I want," I thought.

Aloud I said, "There are no barriers to our true love any more, Hal. I was foolish and silly. Here in your arms is where I belong and where I intend to stay—now and forever!"

THE END SL—5171

"A Letter to Our Readers and Their Parents!"

IT IS OUR EARNEST HOPE THAT YOU ENJOY *reading* our magazines. You know, there are many different kinds of stories, and we get a different kind of satisfaction from each one. We like the stories of Robin Hood and the Iliad of Homer, because we can imagine ourselves heroes, overcoming the enemy. We like stories of great men in history, because they make us ambitious to do good, kind deeds. We like stories of mischievous boys like Tom Sawyer, because Tom does many of the things we would enjoy doing, but some of them we cannot do.

Some of you probably choose books with a lot of pictures, because the pictures seem to make the story live. That, to some extent, explains your Interest in comics.

In our magazines, we try to give you good pictures and interesting stories. We would like to feel, also, that we are helping you to take a stand in favor of right and justice, develop respect for law and order, and learn to protect weaker people, just like the heroes in our adventure stories.

The grown-ups of this world owe you young people an apology, because we haven't made the world a very secure and peaceful place in which to live. Our comics portray, it is true, some of the unhappy things that happen in the world. But they are things you know about anyway—and in the stories, at least, the good people always win. All of us wish it were that way in real life as well.

Just as there are good and bad people, good and bad radio programs, good and bad movies, so there is good and bad literature. In order to help you always choose the good, we will continue to do our best to maintain a high standard in our own magazines.

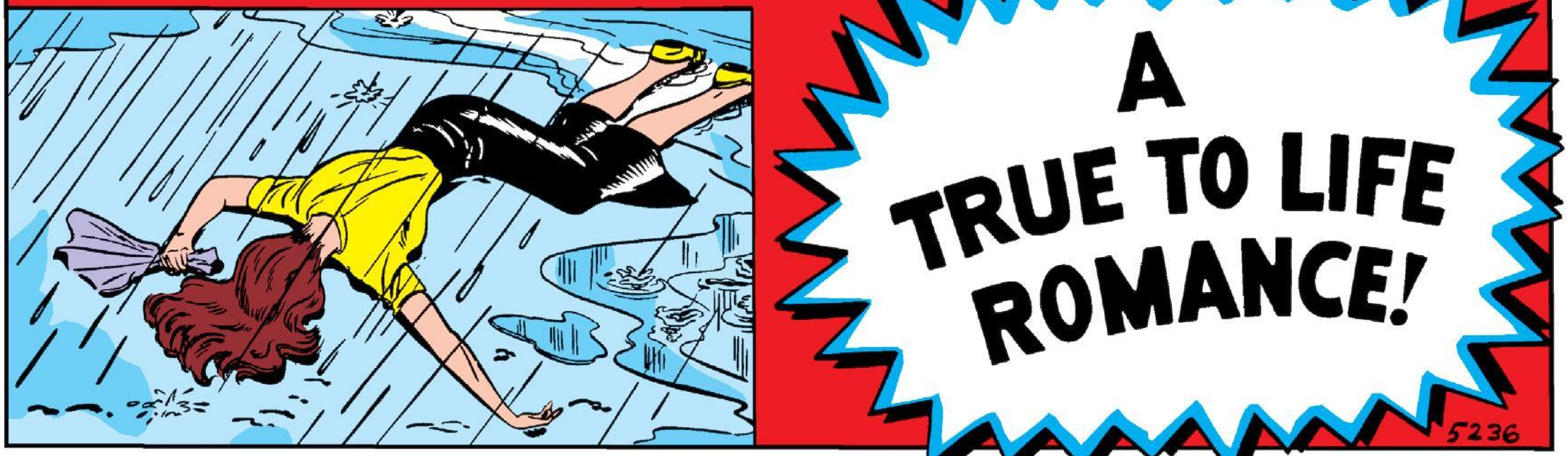
Please remember that comics, with their many pictures, are just one type of literature. We also want you to grow familiar with the great books in our vast literary heritage, and we have no doubt that, with guidance from your parents, teachers, and town librarians, you *will* become interested in those classics, and learn to love them.

Meanwhile, don't forget, though you can get the thrill of humor and adventure in comic magazines—they should, nonetheless, be considered in two ways: Not only for the pleasure they give you, but also as a stepping-stone to your appreciation of books that have stood the test of time as reading fare for all people, young and old.

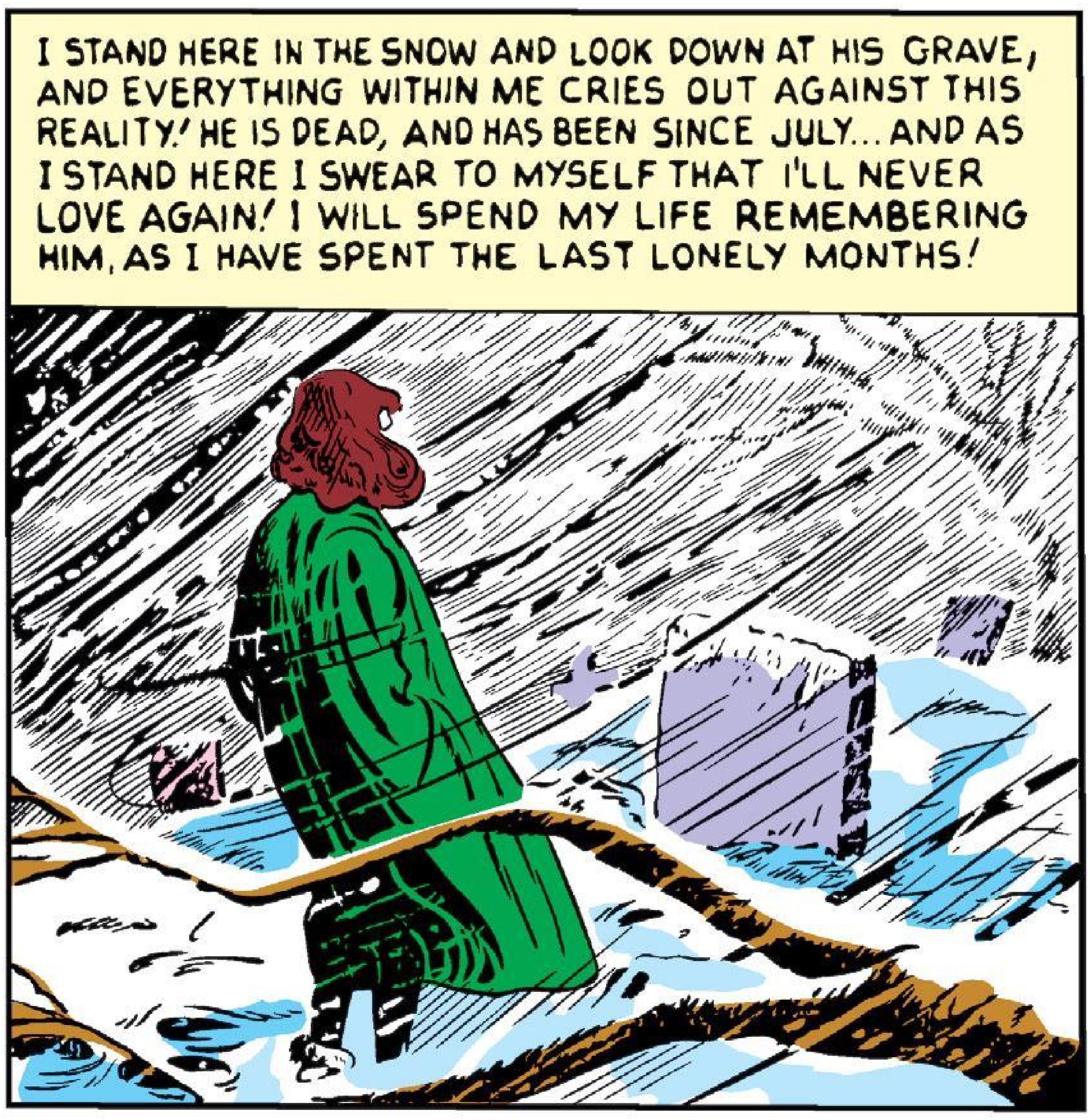
Incidentally, one of our recent editorials used the word "endorsement" in connection with Dr. Thompson's services to us as Editorial Consultant. In the interest of further clarification of Dr. Thompson's functions, we wish to state that Marvel Comic Group submits all its published magazines to Dr. Thompson for review, criticism, and report to our staff, which is under constant instruction to accept Dr. Thompson's criticisms, and to abide by the same. In this way, we constantly strive to bring better comic magazines to our vast group of readers.

MARVEL COMIC GROUP
THE EDITORS

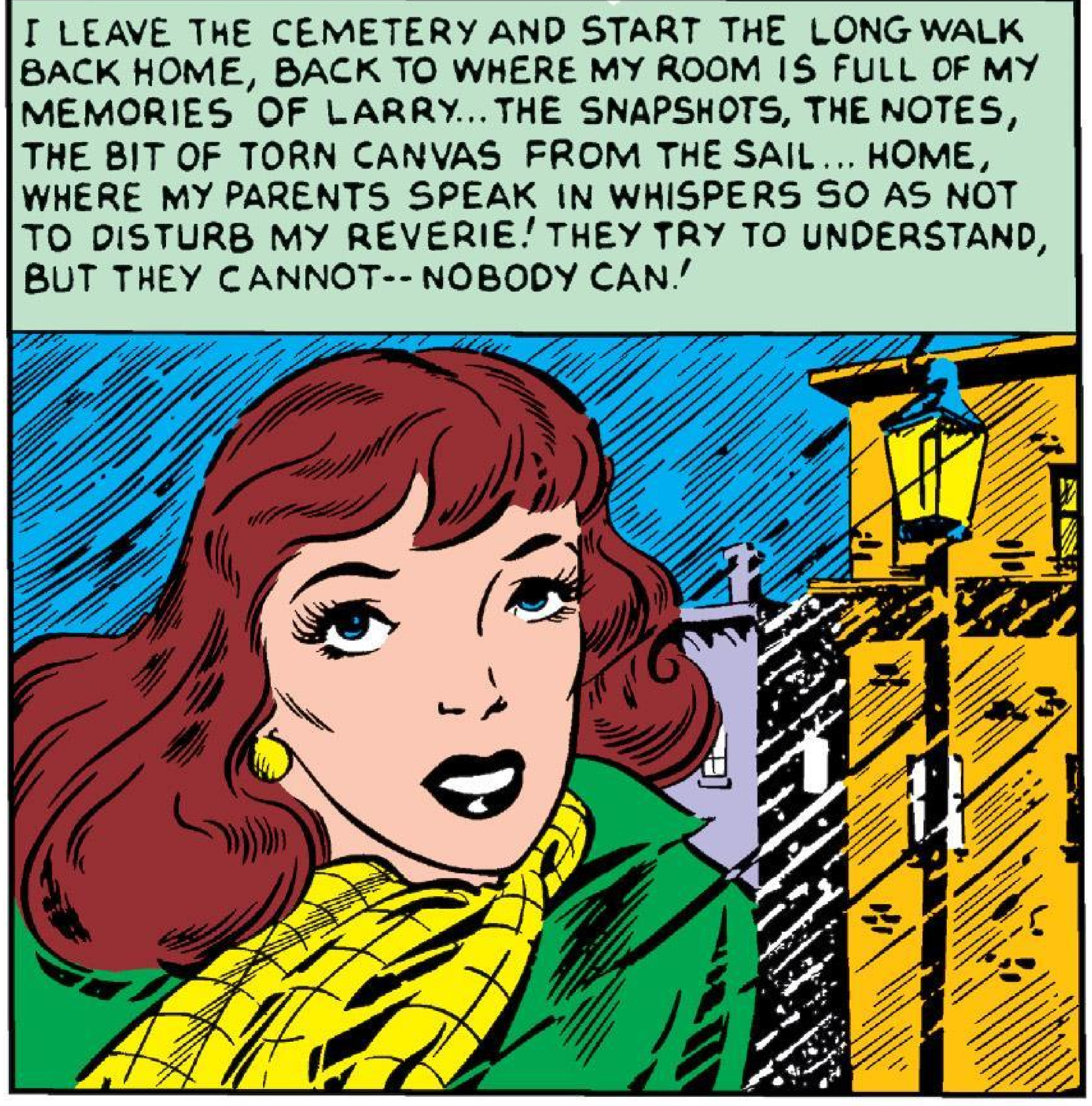
THE HEART WITHIN ME--DEAD!


A TRUE TO LIFE ROMANCE!
5236

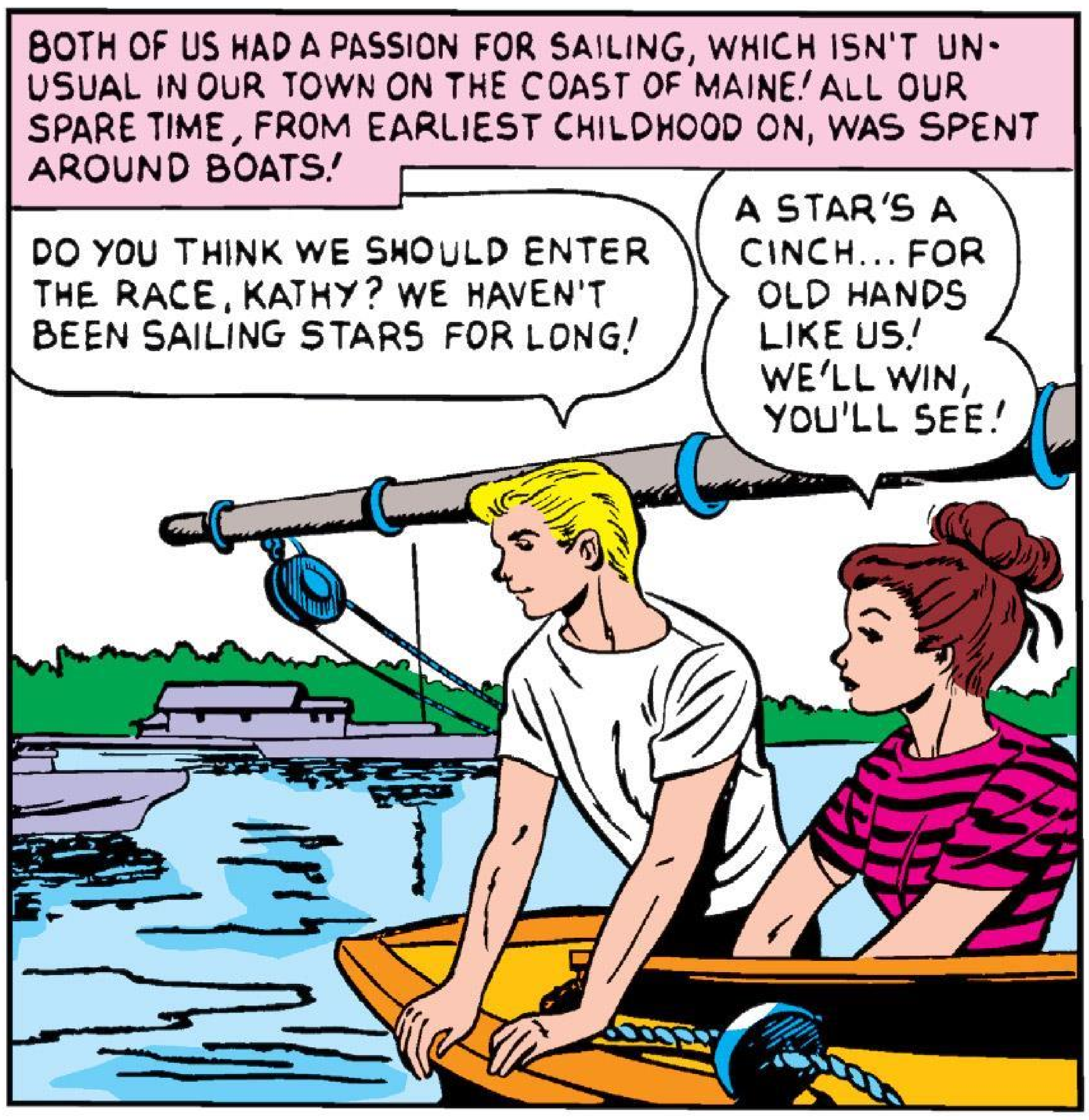
I STAND HERE IN THE SNOW AND LOOK DOWN AT HIS GRAVE, AND EVERYTHING WITHIN ME CRIES OUT AGAINST THIS REALITY! HE IS DEAD, AND HAS BEEN SINCE JULY... AND AS I STAND HERE I SWEAR TO MYSELF THAT I'LL NEVER LOVE AGAIN! I WILL SPEND MY LIFE REMEMBERING HIM, AS I HAVE SPENT THE LAST LONELY MONTHS!



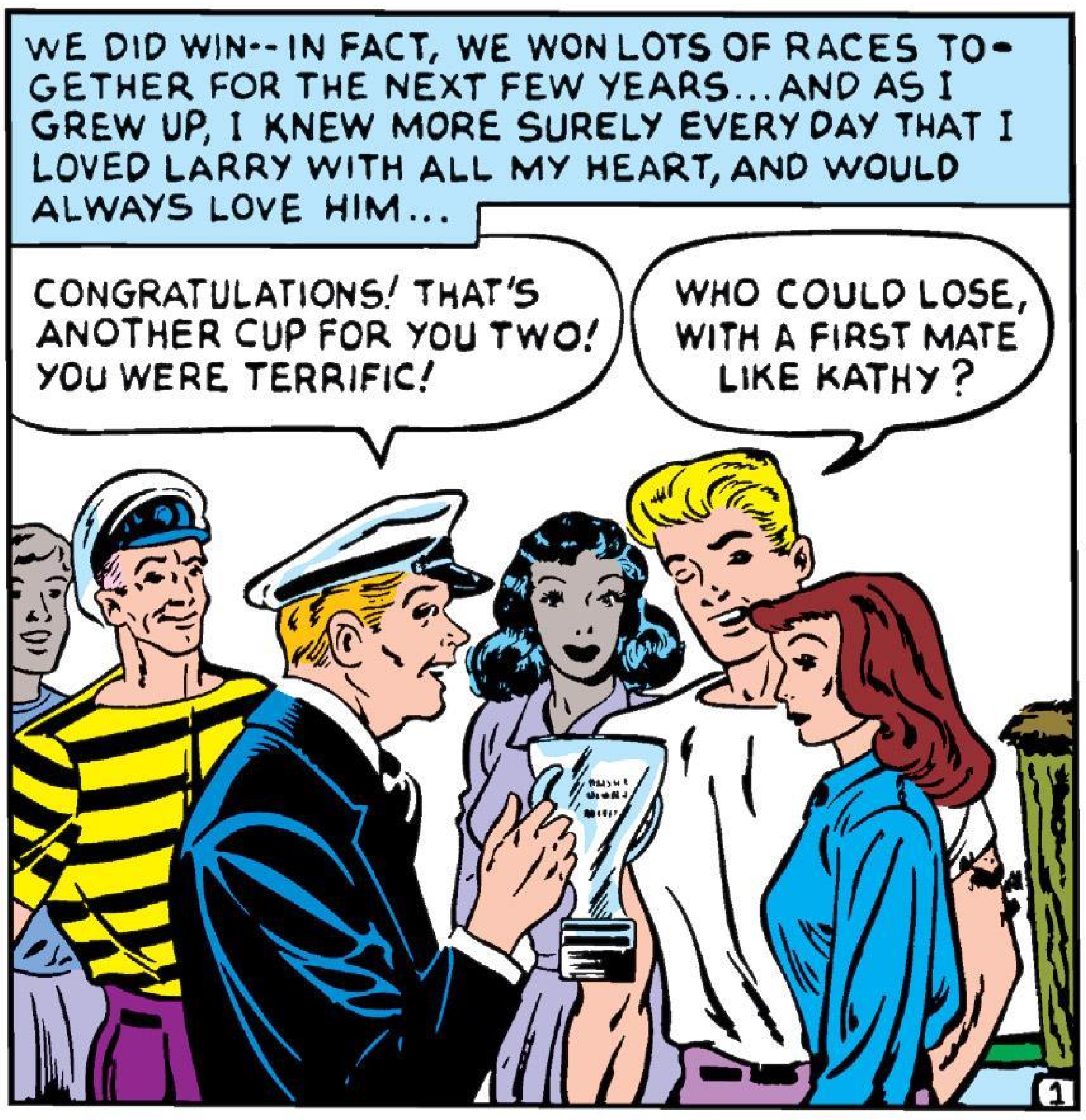
I LEAVE THE CEMETERY AND START THE LONG WALK BACK HOME, BACK TO WHERE MY ROOM IS FULL OF MY MEMORIES OF LARRY... THE SNAPSHOTS, THE NOTES, THE BIT OF TORN CANVAS FROM THE SAIL... HOME, WHERE MY PARENTS SPEAK IN WHISPERS SO AS NOT TO DISTURB MY REVERIE! THEY TRY TO UNDERSTAND, BUT THEY CANNOT--NOBODY CAN!

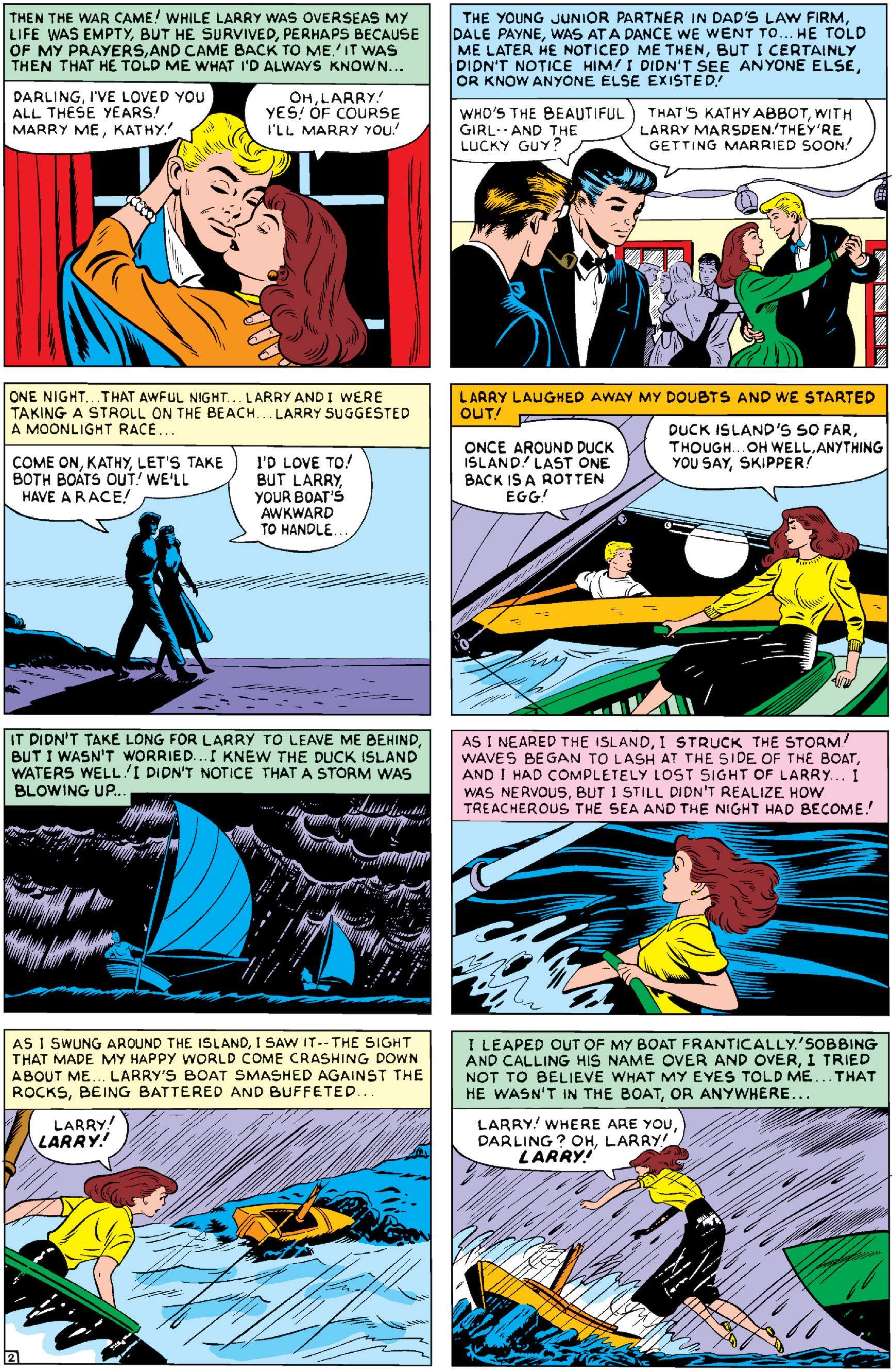


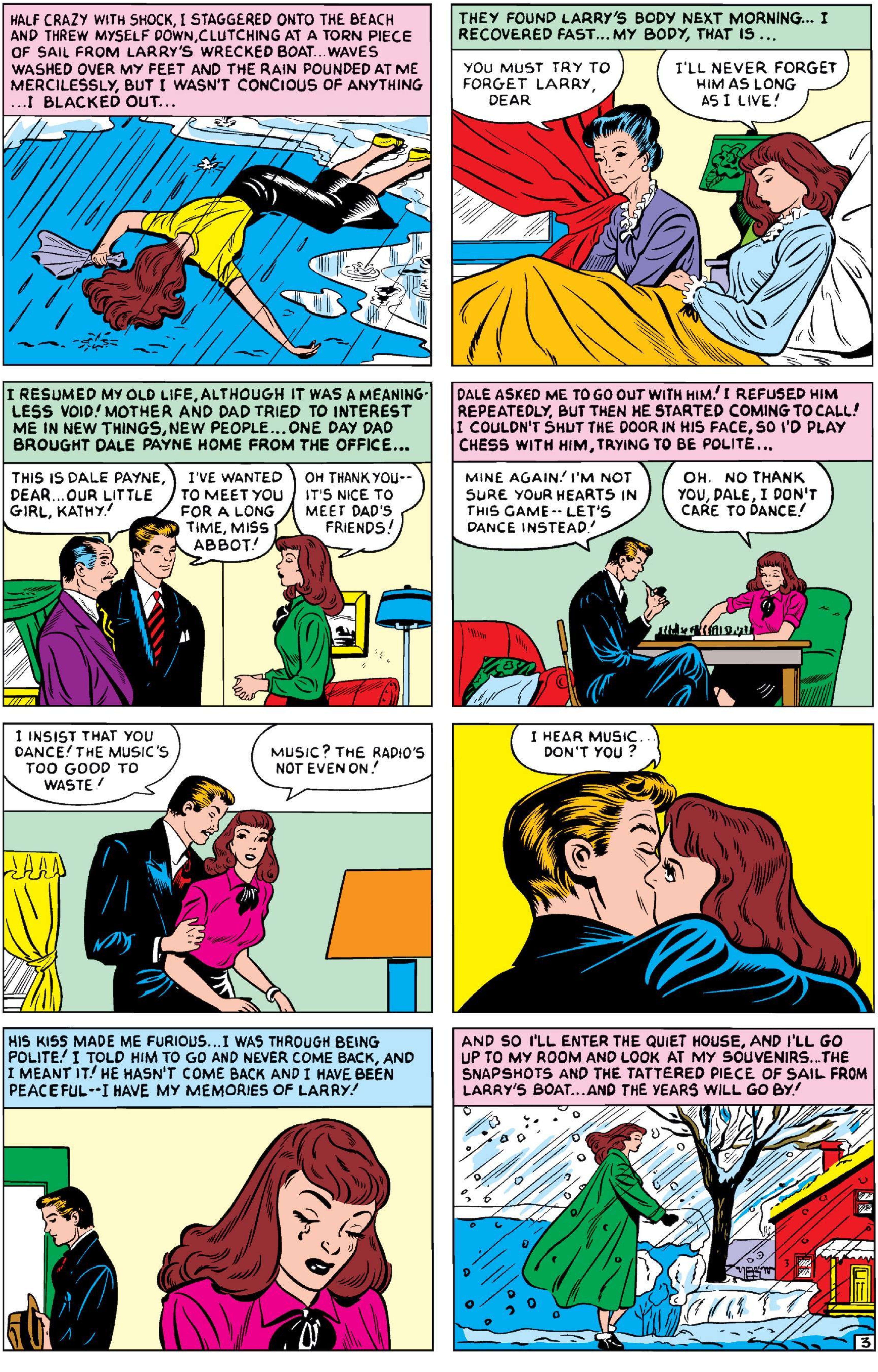
BOTH OF US HAD A PASSION FOR SAILING, WHICH ISN'T UNUSUAL IN OUR TOWN ON THE COAST OF MAINE! ALL OUR SPARE TIME, FROM EARLIEST CHILDHOOD ON, WAS SPENT AROUND BOATS!

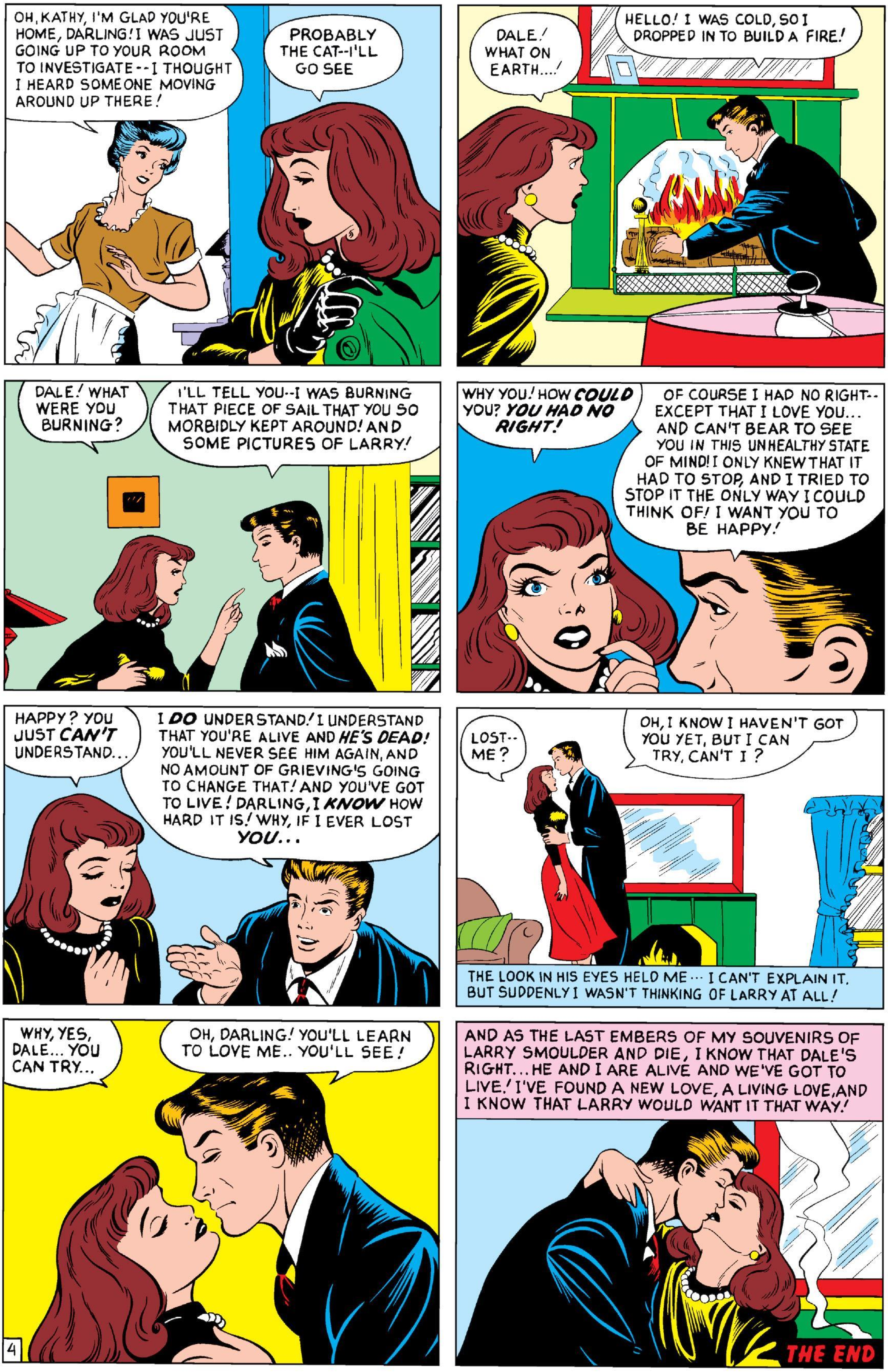

DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD ENTER THE RACE, KATHY? WE HAVEN'T BEEN SAILING STARS FOR LONG!
A STAR'S A CINCH... FOR OLD HANDS LIKE US! WE'LL WIN, YOU'LL SEE!

WE DID WIN--IN FACT, WE WON LOTS OF RACES TOGETHER FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS... AND AS I GREW UP, I KNEW MORE SURELY EVERY DAY THAT I LOVED LARRY WITH ALL MY HEART, AND WOULD ALWAYS LOVE HIM...


CONGRATULATIONS! THAT'S ANOTHER CUP FOR YOU TWO! YOU WERE TERRIFIC!
WHO COULD LOSE, WITH A FIRST MATE LIKE KATHY?


THEN THE WAR CAME! WHILE LARRY WAS OVERSEAS MY LIFE WAS EMPTY, BUT HE SURVIVED, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF MY PRAYERS, AND CAME BACK TO ME! IT WAS THEN THAT HE TOLD ME WHAT I'D ALWAYS KNOWN...
DARLING, I'VE LOVED YOU ALL THESE YEARS! MARRY ME, KATHY!
OH, LARRY! YES! OF COURSE I'LL MARRY YOU!
THE YOUNG JUNIOR PARTNER IN DAD'S LAW FIRM, DALE PAYNE, WAS AT A DANCE WE WENT TO... HE TOLD ME LATER HE NOTICED ME THEN, BUT I CERTAINLY DIDN'T NOTICE HIM! I DIDN'T SEE ANYONE ELSE, OR KNOW ANYONE ELSE EXISTED!
WHO'S THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL--AND THE LUCKY GUY?
THAT'S KATHY ABBOT, WITH LARRY MARSDEN! THEY'RE GETTING MARRIED SOON!
ONE NIGHT... THAT AWFUL NIGHT... LARRY AND I WERE TAKING A STROLL ON THE BEACH... LARRY SUGGESTED A MOONLIGHT RACE...
COME ON, KATHY, LET'S TAKE BOTH BOATS OUT! WE'LL HAVE A RACE!
I'D LOVE TO! BUT LARRY, YOUR BOAT'S AWKWARD TO HANDLE...
LARRY LAUGHED AWAY MY DOUBTS AND WE STARTED OUT!
ONCE AROUND DUCK ISLAND! LAST ONE BACK IS A ROTTEN EGG!
DUCK ISLAND'S SO FAR, THOUGH... OH WELL, ANYTHING YOU SAY, SKIPPER!
IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR LARRY TO LEAVE ME BEHIND, BUT I WASN'T WORRIED... I KNEW THE DUCK ISLAND WATERS WELL! I DIDN'T NOTICE THAT A STORM WAS BLOWING UP...
AS I NEARED THE ISLAND, I STRUCK THE STORM! WAVES BEGAN TO LASH AT THE SIDE OF THE BOAT, AND I HAD COMPLETELY LOST SIGHT OF LARRY... I WAS NERVOUS, BUT I STILL DIDN'T REALIZE HOW TREACHEROUS THE SEA AND THE NIGHT HAD BECOME!
AS I SWUNG AROUND THE ISLAND, I SAW IT--THE SIGHT THAT MADE MY HAPPY WORLD COME CRASHING DOWN ABOUT ME... LARRY'S BOAT SMASHED AGAINST THE ROCKS, BEING BATTERED AND BUFFETED...
LARRY! **LARRY!**
I LEAPED OUT OF MY BOAT FRANTICALLY! SOBBING AND CALLING HIS NAME OVER AND OVER, I TRIED NOT TO BELIEVE WHAT MY EYES TOLD ME... THAT HE WASN'T IN THE BOAT, OR ANYWHERE...
LARRY! WHERE ARE YOU, DARLING? OH, LARRY! **LARRY!**


HALF CRAZY WITH SHOCK, I STAGGERED ONTO THE BEACH AND THREW MYSELF DOWN, CLUTCHING AT A TORN PIECE OF SAIL FROM LARRY'S WRECKED BOAT...WAVES WASHED OVER MY FEET AND THE RAIN POUNDED AT ME MERCILESSLY, BUT I WASN'T CONCIOUS OF ANYTHING ...I BLACKED OUT...
THEY FOUND LARRY'S BODY NEXT MORNING... I RECOVERED FAST... MY BODY, THAT IS...
YOU MUST TRY TO FORGET LARRY, DEAR
I'LL NEVER FORGET HIM AS LONG AS I LIVE!
I RESUMED MY OLD LIFE, ALTHOUGH IT WAS A MEANINGLESS VOID! MOTHER AND DAD TRIED TO INTEREST ME IN NEW THINGS, NEW PEOPLE... ONE DAY DAD BROUGHT DALE PAYNE HOME FROM THE OFFICE...
THIS IS DALE PAYNE, DEAR...OUR LITTLE GIRL, KATHY!
I'VE WANTED TO MEET YOU FOR A LONG TIME, MISS ABBOT!
OH THANK YOU-- IT'S NICE TO MEET DAD'S FRIENDS!
DALE ASKED ME TO GO OUT WITH HIM! I REFUSED HIM REPEATEDLY, BUT THEN HE STARTED COMING TO CALL! I COULDN'T SHUT THE DOOR IN HIS FACE, SO I'D PLAY CHESS WITH HIM, TRYING TO BE POLITE...
MINE AGAIN! I'M NOT SURE YOUR HEARTS IN THIS GAME -- LET'S DANCE INSTEAD!
OH. NO THANK YOU, DALE, I DON'T CARE TO DANCE!
I INSIST THAT YOU DANCE! THE MUSIC'S TOO GOOD TO WASTE!
MUSIC? THE RADIO'S NOT EVEN ON!
I HEAR MUSIC... DON'T YOU?
HIS KISS MADE ME FURIOUS...I WAS THROUGH BEING POLITE! I TOLD HIM TO GO AND NEVER COME BACK, AND I MEANT IT! HE HASN'T COME BACK AND I HAVE BEEN PEACEFUL--I HAVE MY MEMORIES OF LARRY!
AND SO I'LL ENTER THE QUIET HOUSE, AND I'LL GO UP TO MY ROOM AND LOOK AT MY SOUVENIRS...THE SNAPSHOTS AND THE TATTERED PIECE OF SAIL FROM LARRY'S BOAT...AND THE YEARS WILL GO BY!


OH, KATHY, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME, DARLING! I WAS JUST GOING UP TO YOUR ROOM TO INVESTIGATE--I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEONE MOVING AROUND UP THERE!
PROBABLY THE CAT--I'LL GO SEE
DALE! WHAT ON EARTH....!
HELLO! I WAS COLD, SO I DROPPED IN TO BUILD A FIRE!
DALE! WHAT WERE YOU BURNING?
I'LL TELL YOU--I WAS BURNING THAT PIECE OF SAIL THAT YOU SO MORBIDLY KEPT AROUND! AND SOME PICTURES OF LARRY!
WHY YOU! HOW **COULD** YOU? ***YOU HAD NO RIGHT!***
OF COURSE I HAD NO RIGHT--EXCEPT THAT I LOVE YOU... AND CAN'T BEAR TO SEE YOU IN THIS UNHEALTHY STATE OF MIND! I ONLY KNEW THAT IT HAD TO STOP, AND I TRIED TO STOP IT THE ONLY WAY I COULD THINK OF! I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY!
HAPPY? YOU JUST **CAN'T** UNDERSTAND...
I **DO** UNDERSTAND! I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE ALIVE AND **HE'S DEAD!** YOU'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN, AND NO AMOUNT OF GRIEVING'S GOING TO CHANGE THAT! AND YOU'VE GOT TO LIVE! DARLING, I **KNOW** HOW HARD IT IS! WHY, IF I EVER LOST **YOU...**
LOST--ME?
OH, I KNOW I HAVEN'T GOT YOU YET, BUT I CAN TRY, CAN'T I?
THE LOOK IN HIS EYES HELD ME... I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT. BUT SUDDENLY I WASN'T THINKING OF LARRY AT ALL!
WHY, YES, DALE... YOU CAN TRY...
OH, DARLING! YOU'LL LEARN TO LOVE ME.. YOU'LL SEE!
AND AS THE LAST EMBERS OF MY SOUVENIRS OF LARRY SMOULDER AND DIE, I KNOW THAT DALE'S RIGHT... HE AND I ARE ALIVE AND WE'VE GOT TO LIVE! I'VE FOUND A NEW LOVE, A LIVING LOVE, AND I KNOW THAT LARRY WOULD WANT IT THAT WAY!
THE END